We Remember Forgotten Films

CULT MOVIES

CULT MOVIES



WILLIAM CASTLE

ROGER CORMAN

GHIDRAH

LIZ RENAY

HERCULES ON FILM

VINCENT PRICE

GROOVY GHOULIES!

Cult Films of the 60's & 70's

$4.95 USA / $6.95 CANADA

0 74470 81230 2 73

No.23





CULT MOVIES

CULT MOVIES

CULT MOVIES

CULT MOVIES

THERE IS ONLY ONE CULT MOVIES MAGAZINE.



Seeking Something Unusual In Movie Magazines? *Cult Movies* Magazine Is A Roller Coaster Ride Thru The Exciting World Of Exploitation Films! See — Giant Japanese Monsters, '50s Television Favorites, Classic Horrors, Antique Erotica, Low-Budget Marvels, Super Serials, Comedy Greats, New Video Reviews & So Much More! In Every Thrill-Packed Issue!

YES! Sign me up for a subscription to *Cult Movies* Magazine. Enclosed is $30.00 for the next 6 amazing, thrill-packed issues!

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Send check or money order payable to:

Cult Movies • 6201 Sunset Blvd., Suite 152 • Hollywood CA 90028

SUBSCRIBE!

#1 IN UNCUT AND OBSCURE FILMS

MIDNIGHT VIDEO

5010 Church Drive; Coplay, PA 18037 U.S.A.

HORROR & GORE!

Imports, Rarities and Bizarre films!
Many obscure titles never before available with most in English!
NO ONE BEATS OUR VIDEO QUALITY AND THAT IS A GUARANTEE!

COMPARE US WITH ANYONE AND REMEMBER TO **ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTES!**



UNCUT

FULCI
ARGENTO
D'AMATO
BAVA
ROLLIN
FRANCO
NASCHY
OSSORIO
and
MORE!

©1996 SECULA

ALL NEW Catalogue #17 Now Available! • In-depth reviews of all films! • Send $3.00 ($5.00 foreign)

CULT MOVIES

Michael Copner
Editor-In-Chief

Buddy Barnett
Publisher

William T. Barnett
Layout

Marta Dobrovitz
Associate Editor

Japanese Film Consultant:
David G. Milner

Italian Film Consultant:
Stephen Fiacassier

Editorial Assistant:
Kathe Duba

Special photography
by Coco Kiyonaga

Cover Artist
Bill Chancellor

This issue dedicated to Charles Heard
for keeping alive the memory of
the last bride of Dracula, Hope Lugosi.

Special Thanks To:
Mabel Langdon, Jim Singer, Ted Okuda, Tom Weaver, Fred Olen Ray, Jay Schwartz, Chris D., Eric Caidin, Katherine Orrison, Jimmy Keane, Lee Harris, Jana Wells, Larry Elig, Gary & Susan Svehla, Michael F. Blake, Ed & Caroline Plumb, Sara Karloff, Forrest J Ackerman, Steve Cox, Jessie Lilley, Ronald Dale Garmon, Sherry Childress, Jan Henderson, Mike Vraney, Lisa Petrucci, Stuart Galbraith IV, Greg Mank, Brad Linaweaver, Frank Dello Stritto and Titus Moody.

Cult Movies #23 is published quarterly by *Cult Movies*, 6201 Sunset Blvd., Suite 152 Hollywood CA 90028. Nothing may be reprinted without written permission from the publisher. All care, but no responsibility assumed, for unsolicited manuscripts All letters addressed to *Cult Movies* or its contributors will be assumed intended for publication.*Cult Movies* is not responsible for claims made by advertisers All contents © 1997.

Manufactured in the United States of America.

Contents

News & Letters 6

Movie & Video Reviews 10

Harry Langdon's Haunted House 22

Taking No Prisoners 24
by Katherine Orrison

Headlines From Whollyweird 28
by Forrest J Ackerman

Cult Movie People 29

Ghidrah, the 3-Headed Monster 30
by Stuart Galbraith IV

Spanky! 34
by Stephen Cox

Mark Patrick Carducci 38
by Lee Harris

Liz Renay Speaks! 40
Interview by Titus Moody

The Last Bride of Dracula 42
by Gregory William Mank

Portrait of Hope 50
by Charles Heard

Personal Recollections of Lugosi 52
by Hope Lugosi

Japanese Genre Film Mavericks 54
by Chris D.

Curly: The Royalty of Stoogedom 66
by Lee Harris

Immense and Immortal 70
by Stephen Fiacassier

Poe Relations 74
by Brad Linaweaver

Kay Parker 80
Interview by Ted Okuda

William Castle Tribute 82
by Buddy Barnett

Cult Movies After Dark

by Michael Copner, Editor-in-Chief

Movies are my life. When I was a kid in school, our 7th grade English teacher dubbed me "Keystone Copner," after several semesters of having his classes rudely regaled by my anecdotes of Laurel and Hardy, Harry Langdon, Jean Harlow, and W. C. Fields. I never minded the nickname.

My obsession with life on film has always been tied to a relationship with the night. The more I became enthralled with horror films the more I had to address the matter of night time. All good ghost stories are better told in the dark, therefore every Nightmare Theater or Creature Feature was relegated to a Friday or Saturday night broadcast time. In 1965 you want to see Karloff and Lugosi? You're going to have to stay awake well past midnight, exactly like the vampires and ghoulies that populate these grim amusements.

Now just what is going on at night? How can some people sleep through it so easily, just as though it was nothing at all? At 3:15 in the morning I've sat at all-night coffee shops. And I've worked the Graveyard shift projecting films at 24-hour grind houses. So I know there are things under the moon and the stars, going on out there when most good people are usually sleeping. Some writers claim they do their most inspired writing in the hours just before dawn. Nurses claim that's when terminal patients are most likely to drift softly into that dark night.

Since childhood the media has dictated my relationship with the night. Once it was the joyous time when I could watch *Dracula* or *The Raven*. But now the night is like a journey. All day long I concern myself with movie fans, advertisers, distributors, and how many phone messages Titus Moody left on the machine. It makes the day go way too fast.

Then the night comes and it's time to settle in like one would settle in for a long train trip. And you can feel the gears shift.

Videotape used to be a delight, and I'd watch *Bowery At Midnight* over and over. But it's such a solitary experience. Underlying it all is the knowledge that, although I believe it to be the greatest film of all time, there's absolutely no one else in the world watching it but me, and that imparts sadness to the heart.

Early A. M. television offers more solace, since you know others are watching; this is a shared experience. A decade ago, the vast wasteland at night seemed to concern itself entirely with real estate sales. "I think everybody should take the real estate course! I made two million dollars in my first week!" Now it's given way to groovy psychics or heavy breathing, hot pantied ultravixens who want to talk to me at $4.99 for the first minute. Bruce Springsteen must have been sitting up at 3:00 A.M. when he wrote "Fifty Seven Channels and Nothing On."

I always find my thoughts drifting. Do Generation Xers even know what a test pattern used to look like? Do TV stations ever sign off anymore?



Mike Copner and Mabel Langdon at Venice Beach, Calif.

Here in Los Angeles they all seem to plow straight through the restless night, never lowering the American flag and taking an intermission.

Ultimately there's no comfort. Everything on the rube tube is videotaped. I've heard there are entirely automated stations where at night not even an announcer or technician plays a part. It's scarcely better than me playing my own collection of pre-records. Essentially, that leaves reading (excruciatingly solitary) or radio.

Whereas once I'd turned my back on the entire medium, this talk-radio thing is LIVE! It's happening now! I could pick up the phone at quarter to four in the morning and call in to one of these radio shows and be a part of it all, with only a six second delay from the moment of NOW. I've never done it, but just the thought that I could has had me hooked for a year now on Art Bell's all-night, live call-in radio show. This year I made it through nearly every bland Los Angeles night with the help of Art Bell and the claims of his paranormal experts and his slice of American life callers. "UFOs...chupacabras...I was abducted...my mother-in-law is the anti-Christ..." It's all great.

Usually it lets me relax, something TV doesn't do. Reclined, tuned in, I don't think you ever go completely to sleep. It seems as if you drift in and out of awareness for five hours, sometimes incorporating the show into a part of the dream process, like sleep learning. So now Gray Aliens, reverse speech, the Philadelphia Experiment, and Bigfoot are in my memory bank as a personal experience, whether I formerly believed in these things or not. Frank Sinatra told someone, "Give me booze, or give me broads, or give me whatever it takes to get through the night." So, okay, for me, for the time being, it takes Art Bell and talk radio.

Now then; let me digress for one second and talk about Harry Langdon. I'm just nuts about Harry Langdon. I think he's the greatest comic genius of all time. For years I've hoped there would be a re-interest in his films, and over the past six months there has been. Kino On Video released his first three features on videotape and disc, and they are now playing on late night cable stations. Magazines and newspapers such as Film Comment and Classic Images have run evaluations of his work and featured him on their covers. A Langdon fan club has been formed on the internet. Two more Langdon features may be released by Kino. And our friend Mabel Langdon, wife of Harry, has just called to tell me about the company that wants to license his image for a line of Harry Langdon T-shirts.

Now here's the point. Late last year a dude with a radio talk-show asked me out to the studio to converse with him about cult films. Newly enthralled with radio, I was pleased as punch to go on his show. The only cloud was that our entire segment was taped for later broadcast, not live. Oh well, it was still a fun deal. We talked about all the cult icons, Lugosi, Godzilla, Ed Wood. Then the guy asked if I had any predictions about which directions cult moviedom might take. Impulsively, and feeling a bit like Criswell, I ventured that in 1997 we'd see the sudden re-interest in Harry Langdon, and then I went on for a while bragging about how strange and entrancing the comedy of Langdon was in the scheme of things.

I can prove that I said these things because our photographer, Coco Kiyonaga was there; she drove me out to the studio.

Last week the dude from the station called, wanting Fred Olen Ray's phone number for a radio interview. I asked him how the session we did went over. He stammered around and confessed, "I never ran it."

I was heart broken. "Not even the prediction about Harry Langdon?"

He gathered his courage at that. "Actually, that's the part I really objected to. I mean, who has ever heard of Harry Langdon?"

My mood turned black, and I refused to give him Fred Olen Ray's phone number.

Now I'm not a psychic, but I really truly felt and predicted this re-birth in Langdon before it started to happen. Alas, it doesn't do Jean Dixon any good to predict the assassination of Kennedy after his body's already been buried. I really wish radioman would have run at least the part about my personal all-time favorite comedian. If only I ran the zoo...

And that's the point. I do enjoy talking to people. I hate to brag too much, but my phone rings constantly, so I know people like talking to me. If I could get a station and a few sponsors to pay the bills, maybe I could go on with an all-night show, talking to people about cultish films for four or five hours. Just to validate my personal obsession, I'd have the wonderful Mabel Langdon be my co-host, the 1990s, female version of Ed McMahon; we'll laugh at each others' jokes if no one else is calling in to talk to us. I call Mrs. Langdon about once a week as it is; she might as well get paid for it.

And I'm awake most of the night as it is. I predict that both the night and the airwaves are ready for my show. If I'm ever on the air, could you stay awake and call me?■



Letters

Concerning the interview with Alex Gordon in issue #22, I feel there are a few things which should be stated.

The interview was originally aired on WBAI on Jan 23, 1995. What is transcribed in *Cult Movies* does not include my on the air rebuttal, later the same evening. There are also deletions in which Gordon attacks other people, and other statements which were completely false. Perhaps the fact that they make Gordon look bad is the reason they were not included.

Gordon, billed as "one of the greatest living authorities on film" in Fangoria magazine, evidently has had a dislike for me since I corrected him (in the very pages of the same magazine) regarding an Ed Wood movie he had no knowledge of.

His contention that he refused to meet with me for "many, many months" is just untrue. My actual interview with Gordon was very pleasant and cordial—and I have the tape to prove it. Dear Alex Gordon, called "a gentleman" by his sycophantic interviewers on the radio show, proceeds to reveal himself with the statement that I arrived for the interviewed and "hadn't bathed in a month, I'm sure." Bitterness and envy regarding the success of my book, perhaps?

According to Gordon I am "a complete charlatan," and my book is "complete rubbish — absolute rubbish." He sounds like an old grandma. My book was constructed documentary style, with direct verbatim quotes from hundreds of people who knew and worked with Ed Wood.

Gordon lived with Wood for three months and never suspected he was a transvestite. He knew Lugosi for years and knew nothing of his problems with morphine. But Ed Wood knew about it, as did Dolores Fuller, Paul Marco and others. It would seem That Alex Gordon just did not know people very well.

So Gordon is now taking major credit for writing *Bride of the Monster*! How time changes memory. Particularly when Ed Wood and the movie are now so famous... The following is from Fantastic Monsters Of The Films, Vol 1, #5 (1963) just eight years after the movie's original release, when perhaps Gordon's memory was a little fresher:

"While I was trying to set up a new picture, to star Bela and Boris Karloff, an independent producer rewrote my Atomic Monster script and made a very low budget picture VAGUELY BASED ON IT called *Bride Of The Monster*."

An independent producer! Gordon doesn't even deem to mention Wood's name! But after he became famous, voila! "I remember Eddie Wood, parts one and two!"

Gordon assumes that since Wood is dead, no one can refute his claims. Well, here's Ed Wood on that very subject, from a 1973 interview with Bob Cremer:

"I wrote it for him. (Lugosi) I wrote every line of the show. I give Alex Gordon a credit on that thing because he gave me the idea."

The same applies to Jailbait. Wood, overly generous to a fault, was trying to help his friend with a screen credit. Something he later regretted.

If Gordon is such a writer, where are his subsequent screenwriting credits?

As to the drearily predictable comments from Tom Weaver and Gordon regarding Wood's movie being "bad", I'll take five minutes from any Ed Wood movie for the entire output of Alex Gordon's film productions.

Rudolph Grey
New York, NY

As an avid reader of your magazine, I feel I simply must complain about the sleazy ads and articles that have been published lately, which, in my opinion, belong in those cheaply-produced "girly" magazines. I think you have lost the point of what this magazine is all about, as is stated on the front of your magazine: "We remember forgotten films." Porno is worth forgetting.

My 15-year-old daughter likes to read the occasional article on people she is interested in, such as those excellent articles on the Stooges by Lee Harris. She doesn't want to see articles in the same magazine about a porno queen talking in detail about the type of sexual activities she has 'performed' in her movies, or ads for phone sex, or adult sex videos. When things get this bad, I have to photocopy the articles she wants to read.

Keep up the good work on printing articles like the excerpt from the official biography of Dwight Frye, and the Alex Gordon interview, in which he praises Bela Lugosi and trashes Tim Burton's movie Ed Wood. These are things that true fans want to read about.

Thank you for your time, and I will continue to purchase *Cult Movies*.

Sincerely,
Linda Gillies
Ontario, Canada

I generally enjoy your magazine, but Buddy Barnett's ill-conceived comments in issue #22 demand a response.

Barnett dismisses the recent David Lynch film *Lost Highway*, as "not making the least bit of sense." A paragraph later he frankly admits that he considers all of David Cronenberg's films 'just plain awful."

What is this guy doing writing for *Cult Movies*?

These two comments make it clear Barnett has no affinity for films that challenge the mainstream style of telling stories. Lynch and Cronenberg are two of out most important filmmakers, consistently redefining how films can unveil narrative, portray interpersonal relationships, and bring heightened meaning with the tools of cinematic art.

Barnett's championing of Milos Forman's *People Vs Larry Flynt* proves he's a sucker for the mainstream Hollywood style. Flynt is at heart a straightforward bio with a moral center grafted on, in order for non-discriminating viewers such as Barnett to consider the "journey" of Flynt's life as a high-minded one, even though he's generally perceived as an exploiter of his accidental First-Amendment-advocate status and has admitted as much in print. Forman's uncritical acceptance of Flynt is revisionist and I consider it offensive in its ignorance.

Cronenberg's *Crash* attempts to shed light on the confluence between the body and the mind — the spiritual and the physical — themes Cronenberg's been struggling with since *They Came From Within*. *Crash* is difficult, transcendental, and much more the "ground-breaking" film. It may not be much fun to watch, but I don't consider it "offensive."

Don't get me wrong — I don't think Larry Flynt is a terrible movie. I just wish Barnett would be more thoughtful before he reveals himself as such a shallow-thinking sucker.

Roger Leatherwood
Hollywood, CA

I enjoyed issue #22. Here's an interesting tidbit about the 1962 Hammer version of *Phantom Of The Opera*, which is mentioned in the article "Angel or Father? Friend or Phantom?" It was originally developed as a starring vehicle for Cary Grant (!) because in the late 1950's Grant approached Hammer about starring in a horror movie and wanted to star as the Phantom. Hammer honchos ultimately didn't think Grant was scary enough for the part. Also, *The Wild, Wild West* TV series did an episode that's a variation on Phantom, in which The Phantom is not only a woman but a former opera singer!

Sincerely,
Wes Pierce
Orlando, FL

Concerning your statement that Harry Langdon's first short films were made for Mack Sennett in 1924, I suppose you are telescoping events for your readers. As you know, Mr. Langdon starred in several films (exact number unknown, but at least three, made for Sol Lesser's Principal Pictures in the summer and fall of 1923). After Sennett bought Langdon's contract, it was my impression, from reports in "The Exhibitor's Herald" at the time, that work started in late 1923 on *Smile Please*, his first-made (but second-released) Sennett short.

I'm glad to see you've cleared up a few matters: for instance, Harry's daughter Virginia, who crops up here and there in the literature, would appear to be pure fiction by your account, and Mrs. Langdon should know.

Best Wishes,
Floyd Bennett
Downers Grove, IL

Many thanks for your excellent article in #21, "What Good Is A Brain Without Eyes To See?" by Frank Dello Stritto. It was a real pleasure to read something on the classic Universal Frankenstein series that was insightful and that took the movies' characterizations seriously.

The discussion about brains was fascinating. It has been a common and rational assumption that if Man #1's brain is transplanted into Man #2's body, when Man #2 revives he will have the

(continued)

consciousness and personality (soul?) of Man #1. But, since such a transplant has never actually occured, we don't know that this would happen. In *Ghost of Frankenstein*, the Monster awakes and is no longer "the poor soul that Henry brought to life." He now is Ygor. In *Frankenstein Meets The Wolfman, the Monster* (in his scrapped dialogue) never seems to refer to himself (or believe himself to be) Ygor; he is simply the Monster again. Perhaps the trauma of the brain transplant in *Ghost*, the fire and subsequent freezing, and, as Dello Stritto sharply points out, the lack of cosmic rays, all resulted in the body's overwhelming the brain, a physiological absorption of a foreign entity, akin to acceptance of a transplanted heart or kidney.

Once again, thanks for the pleasure of a truly intelligent article. Also, the cover painting of Glenn Strange by Bill Chancellor was awesome; and, to compliment it, a fine photo of Karloff as the Monster on the inside front cover.

Yours truly,
Albert Tapia
El Centro, CA

I'm glad to hear Ms. Katherine Orrison's new book will be out soon. I had to travel to Hollywood before I could locate a copy of her last one, *Lionheart* — but loved every page! Hopefully *Written In Stone* will receive wider distribution.

And for what it's worth, I thought George Bailey's (and therefore Capra's) ideal of Bedford Falls was dull. That town was swinging until George came back! But then, I also though Dorothy should have stayed in Oz!!

Phil Berry
South Brisbane, Australia

I know I'm always saying I love your covers, but the one with Glenn Strange as the Frankenstein monster was the greatest! Made me feel like I was holding a new issue of FM at 10 years of age!

P. Riggs
Houston, TX

Cult Movies is fascinating to me for sheer novelty value! In this zine, to paraphrase Cole Porter, father of Sidney, Anything Goes! While the more mainstream genre mags are getting more esoteric, with stuff on Larry Buchanan, *Cult Movies* just digs even deeper. An interview with Dwight Frye's cousin's neighbor! Wow! I know you think I'm being sarcastic but I'm not. *Cult Movies* magazine is so anti-hip, it's the hippest of all!!!

John Marshall
Rancocas, NJ

Frank Dello Stritto has consistently contributed exceptional articles to your magazine. For #22 he provides an intelligent, perceptive overview of the various incarnations of the Phantom of the Opera.

Alex Gordon's memories of Wood, Lugosi and Karloff were wonderfully entertaining. I admire his candor, though I doubt if Dolores Fuller or Rudolph Grey appreciated his frankness. I liked Gray's *Nightmare of Ecstasy* book and loved Tim Burton's Ed Wood, although I realize much of the film is fabricated. I totally agree with Gordon regarding the conservative critic Michael Medved. I found Rudy Minger's review of *Plan 9* to be refreshing and unbiased.

As Buddy Barnett points out in Cult Movies Underground, most contemporary movies are not worth a dime. I generally avoid the latest big-budget Hollywood dud, preferring to indulge in vintage horror, science fiction and cult films on video. Keep remembering forgotten films and I'll keep subscribing to your magazine.

Timothy M. Walters
Muskogee, OK

Thanks for yet another top-shelf issue in #22. The articles on Dwight Frye and Phantom of the Opera are practically books in themselves, packed with information I'd never find on my own. And as a Harry Langdon fan, I've followed your series on Harry with keen interest. I hope it encourages readers to check out his films, now surfacing on video.

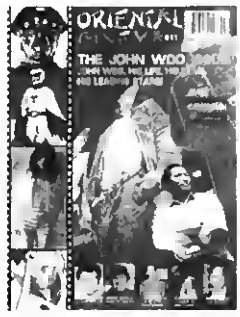
Brian Nelson
Worcester, MA

Got something to say? Write to:

Cult Movies Magazine
6201 Sunset Blvd.,
Suite 152
Hollywood CA 90028



Each issue 50% color on glossy paper!
DRACULINA #30: Cynthia Rothrock - **$6**
DRACULINA #29: Tender Flesh, Savannah, Margaux Hemingway - **$6**
DRACULINA #28: Lorissa McComas, Terry Moore - **$6**
DRACULINA #27: Jewel Shepard, Debbie Rochon - **$6**
DRACULINA #26: Monique Parent, Dolores Fuller - **$6**
DRACULINA #25: Vampire Conspiracy, Brinke Stevens - **$6**
DRACULINA #24: Rhonda Shear, Marilyn Burns - **$6**
DRACULINA #23: Julie Strain, Deborah Dutch - **$6**



ORIENTAL CINEMA #11: John Woo issue! **$5**
OC #10: Gigantic Titans! **$5**
OC #9: Asian Femme Fatales issue **$5**
OC #8: Japanese Science Fiction **$5**
OC #7: Kung Fu issue **$5**
OC #6: Gamera issue **$4**
OC #5: Hong Kong Gangster issue **$4**
OC #4: Godzilla issue **$4**
OC #3: Jackie Chan issue **$3.25**
OC #2: Robo-Hero issue **$3.25**
OC #1: Ninja issue! **$3.25**



SHE #8: Women in Prison Part 2 **$5**
SHE #7: Women in Prison Part 1 **$4**
SHE #6: Julie Lee! **$4**
SHE #5: Amy Yip! **$4**
SHE #4: Fighting Femmes of the Wild West **$3.50**
SHE #3: Anita Mui! **$3.50**
SHE #2: Pauline Chan! **$3.50**
SHE #1: Carrie Ng! **$3.50**



DISORDER & GENIUS: THE COMPLETE FILMS OF KLAUS KINSKI - Digest sized book by Lucas Balbo and Laurent Aknin imported **$12**



THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO DEADLY CHINA DOLLS is the first book of its kind to explore the exciting world of Oriental actresses. 260 pages of color and b&w shots of your favorite stars complete with filmographies and info on their careers. Great book imported from England **$40** (plus **$5** shipping)



VIRGINS & VAMPIRES: The first photo book dedicated to French Cult Director of EROTIC FRISSIONS JEAN ROLLIN. Includes Essays by Rollin on his films, Complete filmogrpahy, Interview, More than 650 color & b/w stills - most never before published, plus exclusive full length CD with original soundtrack from Rollins film THE TWO ORPHAN VAMPIRES! Brand new! Only **$50** (plus **$4** shipping)

visit our web site at: www.draculina.com

We have over 160 magazines, books and comics! Over 250 videos! Trading cards, art and more!
Great import selection with FLESH & BLOOD, UNCUT, PORCO MONDO, EASTERN HEROES and MORE!
Send $2 for our 48 page catalog (sent free with any order!)

Postage: $2 for first mag, 75 for each additional **Foreign:** $3 for first, $1.75 each additional
We accept Visa & MasterCard. Fax 618-659-1129 tel 618-659-1293 e-mail dracdirect@aol.com
DRACULINA • PO BOX 587 • GLEN CARBON, IL • 62034
Make checks payable to **DRACULINA**

Clarion International at O'Hare

6810 N. Mannheim Road, Rosemont, IL

SATURDAY, November 15, 1997, 10AM-5PM
SUNDAY, November 16, 1997, 10AM-5PM

ADMISSION IS $5.00 DAILY.

Admission is free to collectors who stay at the Clarion International Hotel at O'Hare under our special "Hollywood Collectors Show, Inc." Room Rate of $65 per night (1-4 persons). Children are admitted free with an adult. Minimum 2 night hotel stay for both days free admission. Reservations must be made no later than 3 weeks before showtime to get our special hotel rate. After that time, rooms based upon availability at a higher rate. For hotel reservation call (847) 297-8464. FREE PARKING. The Clarion International is two miles from the O'Hare Airport. Complimentary shuttle to and from this airport.

VISIT THE SHOW VOTED #1

Celebrities Who Plan To Attend Our Nov. 15th & 16th Show Are:

From WALT DISNEY'S "CINDERELLA"
Ilene Woods - voice of 'Cinderella'

From "DYNASTY"
Pamela Sue Martin

From "I'VE GOT A SECRET" & "KNOTS LANDING"
Betsy Palmer

From "THE MUNSTERS"
Butch Patrick
Pat Priest

Plus Mr. Blackwell

And MGM ACADEMY AWARD WINNER
Margaret O'Brien

MORE CELEBRITIES TO BE ANNOUNCED!

Dealer and Show Information:
Ray Courts/Hollywood Collectors Show, Inc.
PO Box 5040, Spring Hill, Florida 34611
Phone: (352) 683-5110 Fax: (352) 688-8114
www.HollywoodCollectorShow.com

Upcoming 1997 Show Schedule:

October 4th & 5th	North Hollywood
November 15th & 16th	Chicago O'Hare

Upcoming 1998 Show Schedule:

January 17th & 18th	North Hollywood
March 21st & 22nd	Chicago O'Hare
April 5th & 6th	North Hollywood

©HOLLYWOOD COLLECTORS SHOW INC. 1997
Presented by HOLLYWOOD COLLECTORS SHOW, INC.

Stay on our mailing list and you'll be informed of all future shows

Ray & Sharon Courts Present

HOLLYWOOD MEMORABILIA & CELEBRITIES SHOW

CHICAGO



FILM & VIDEO REVIEWS





Classic Boob Tube Bloopers, Volume One

"A blister on your thing can be painful." — Tyrone F Hornai

A collection of flubs from television shows, including *You Bet Your Life*, *Peyton Place*, *M*A*S*H*, *Gunsmoke*, and *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*. Except for the *You Bet Your Life* stuff, these are reels put together by networks or production companies for the entertainment of executives, cast and crew members, and not intended for the public. Consequently there is some "in" humor that is lost on the average viewer. *The Peyton Place* material is particularly rough sledding.

What I feel really makes this *Classic Boob Tube Bloopers* collection worthwhile is the wealth of *Laugh-In* out-takes. They are by far the most entertaining part of the tape. There are some bits with Arte Johnson, Ruth Buzzi and Don Rickles that are achingly funny. The *Laugh-In* material offers lots of interesting guest stars, too: Orson Welles, Bob Hope, Sammy Davis, Jr., and many more.

On the down side, the original *Star Trek* bloopers are trotted out for the umpteenth time, looking rather dark and scratchy here.

Very good picture quality, butt-ugly box art. Definitely worth a look. Available from the wonderful folks at Something Weird Video.

Reviewed by Tim Murphy

My Tale Is Hot

(a.k.a. *Always on Monday*, 1964, Dir. by Seymour Tokus [Dan Sonney]. With Little Jack Little, Manny Goodtimes, Candy Barr.)

Things are slow in Hell. Lucifer U. Devil (Manny Goodtimes) hasn't secured a fresh soul since Adolph Hitler. His wife, Saturna (Ima Ghoul), is needling him to get off his pointed posterior and spring back into action. When Ben-Hur Ova (burlesque comedian Little Jack Little, looking like nearly every New York City hot dog vendor I've ever seen) is voted the "World's Most Faithful Husband" by Ladies House Companion magazine, Lucifer is challenged by the claim that no earthly temptation can lure Ben away from his loving spouse, Miasis (Bea Reddy). "I'll have him cheating on his wife within two shakes of a sinner's tail," the Devil vows.

Lucifer tries to corrupt the hapless hubby with lots of nubile (and naked) lovelies, but to no avail. It turns out that Ben is a visiting Arabian sheik with a harem outnumbering the chorus line at Radio City Music Hall, tempting this noodnik with babes is like tempting an Eskimo with an air conditioner.

Written, produced and directed by noted exploitation film distributor Dan Sonney (under the pseudonym "Seymour Tokus"), *My Tale is Hot* is a typically silly '60s nudie cutie. (It's billed as a "fanny-see in living Skin-A-Scope with the cast listed "in order of exposure." Har-de-har-har.) The threadbare plot is liberally peppered with elbow-in-the-ribs humor, most of it courtesy of Little Jack Little, the diminutive veteran of burleycue and nudie cutie films (*Tomb It May Concern, Not Tonight Henry!*). Even by lowly skin-flick standards, the production values are more impoverished than usual, Ed Wood movies have more ambiance than this. But The budgetary deficiency is a moot point, really, because nudie cutie producers weren't concerned about anything as trivial as cinematic "art" — they just wanted to exhibit as much female flesh as they could get away with. And the epidermal count here is quite high.

My Tale Is Hot's chief claim to fame is a four-minute dance routine showcasing legendary stripper Candy Barr. This footage (c. 1956) is randomly inserted into the proceedings, earning her a guest star billing and allowing the filmmakers to exploit her notoriety (she made national headlines when a marijuana bust landed her in prison).

In contrast to the stripping careers of Lili St. Cyr and Tempest Storm, both of whom made numerous features and shorts, there's very little footage that exists of the busty, baby-faced Miss Barr, and almost nothing of her strip act. (Another blonde stripper named Candia Barr who is no relation, appeared in a few strip loops, which are often incorrectly credited to the original CB.) So Candy's dance routine in this film should be of great interest to striptease scholars everywhere.

Candy, however, remains underwhelmed; she told me recently: "I can't remember where or even why that film was taken, but that footage is not an accurate representation of what my act was like. I used to put on a hell of a show, honey, and what you see me do in that film is a simple, nothing bit; it just shows me rehearsing, trying to get the 'feel of the floor.' In other words, I'm dancing around, checking to see where the best areas of the floor are and where there might be any problem spots, rough spots that might be difficult to perform on. By moving my way around, I could memorize these spots. That's why you see me working barefoot.

"You can also tell it's a rehearsal because after I remove the long fringe from my outfit, I'm in my panties. For my actual performances, I never wore just panties; I always had short fringe over it.

"I'll admit the footage is well-edited and they picked good music to go with it, but I'm obviously not putting 100% of myself into this performance and it shows. Some people might think it's okay, but I know I was better than that."

Candy's film output, discounting the infamous stag reel *Smart Aleck* and a few nudie "loops," was virtually nonexistent, though not for a lack of interest on the part of producers. (Roles in *Sex Kittens Go To College* and *The Unforgiven*, both 1960 releases, didn't pan out, and in 1978 she flatly refused an offer to star in a porno movie to be called *A Lot Of Lovin'*. Although she coached Joan Collins for a dance sequence in *Seven Thieves* (1960), Candy doesn't appear in the film.)

The video transfer was taken from an old 35mm theatrical print that bears two titles, Always On Monday and *My Tale Is Hot*. The print shows some wear in spots, and the color has faded to a reddish hue. Taking into account the rarity of this picture — it was considered a lost film until a couple years ago — and the fact that the skin tones (and there's plenty) aren't horribly affected, the lack of vibrant hues isn't a major distraction.

Since My Tale Is Hot is hardly a candidate for an American Film Institute restoration, it's unlikely that an improved version will ever be offered.

All told, this is an undistinguished nudie cutie entry, except when Candy Barr takes center stage. That's when the film really — you should pardon the expression — takes off.

"I used to think people watched my act because they appreciated my artistry and grace, says Candy. "It wasn't until years later that I realized they just wanted to see my boobs bounce!" Which pretty much sums up the appeal of *My Tale Is Hot*.

It's available from Something Weird Video of Seattle.

Reviewed by Ted Okuda

Vampire Journals

(Written & Directed by Ted Nicolaou, with Jonathon Morris, Kirsten Cerre, David Gunn. 1997, color, on videotape and laserdisc from Full Moon Productions.)

Some vampire films pussyfoot around the subject matter. This is not one of those films. The biting, drinking and slaughter of the undead is all there is to this show, and it's blasted at you from the first moment. It's a shocking intro, and there are surprise shocks throughout the movie. Avenging vampire stalks a king-of-the-vampires in eastern Europe, and a whole gaggle of other vampires get caught up in the fray.

The costumes and locations set an elegant foundation for the tale. Production is enlivened by a restless, roaming camera, ever-seeking just as the protagonists of the film are ever-seeking. Actress Ilinka Goya is a standout as a seething, sexual and deadly vampiress, and Jonathon Morris as the king vampire is in full command, though some of the other performers aren't up to their weighty dialogue.

Sometimes the Goth-eek atmosphere is ladled on way thick, ahhh, the lair, the mysteries, the eternal night. It's beautiful youngsters made up ghastly-ghastly, but this is what 1990's new-vampire-kids-on-the-block want vampirism to be like.

Reviewed by Michael Copner

Please Don't Eat My Mother

(1972, Directed by Carl Monson. With Buck Kartalian, Lyn Lundgren, Rene Bond, Ric Lutze, Flora Wisel, Alicia Friedland.)

Twelve years after the release of Roger Corman's cult classic *Little Shop of Horrors* and 14 years before the big-budget musical remake based on the off-Broadway play, exploitation movie guru Harry Novak produced this softcore sex version which followed the same basic plot.

Middle-aged voyeur Henry Fudd (Buck Kartalian) discovers a talking plant in a small flower shop. All goes well at first, as Henry feeds the plant "Pro-Pro-Gro," but as it becomes larger, the plant demands more substantial meals: flies, frogs, cats and dogs. Eventually it grows to be over six feet tall (looking like a cross between a Venus fly trap and something out of a kindergarten production of *Jack and the Beanstalk*) and Henry is forced to come up with human sacrifices to appease the big green monster.

Please Don't Eat My Mother! isn't concerned about remaining faithful to its source material, rather, the story is just an excuse to connect a series of softcore sex scenes. Like many of these sexed-up parodies, this alleged farce misfires because it's spoofing something that's already funny. It is, however, noteble for one



reason: a 15 minute sequence featuring Rene Bond.

At all the exploitation movie performers of the late '60s and early '70s, perhaps none was more omnipresent than Rene Bond. With the possible exception of Uschi Digart, Rene was the most familiar figure (literally!) of the era. Unlike Uschi, who limited her work to softcore productions only, Rene was seen in virtually every type of exploitation movie, from softcore "roughies" (*The Adult Version of Jekyll & Hyde, Convict's Women*) to XXX-rated features (*Teenage Fantasies, Kim Comes Home*) and 8mm stag loops. She was so prolific (over 100 films to her credit) that it was surprising when she didn't turn up in an exploitation movie!!!

There was no real progression to Bond's "career," at any given time, she could be either the lead actress in one production and yet have a brief, thankless walk-on in another, as though she just happened to be on the set and was recruited on the spot. Also inconsistent was her billing (Diane Lee and Annie Hall were just two of her nom de plumes) and her physical appearance (she had undergone breast enlargement surgery early in her film career, even though she was just as appealing without the increased bra size).

The moon-faced, saucer-eyed Bond was a real cutie, alright, but it was her bubbly, free-spirited personality that made her, then and now, an exploitation movie cult figure. She was a true hedonist, her always-passionate sex scenes made you feel as though you were peeking through her bedroom window rather than watching an actress at work. While her thespic skills were negligible and her delivery stilted in dramatic parts, Rene excelled in comedy roles. (In the 1970 film *Country Cuzzins*, another Harry Novak softcore production, she turned in a genuinely funny performance as a hot-to-trot farmer's daughter.)

In *Please Don't Eat My Mother!*, Rene plays a lusty housewife who murders her husband and then allows his corpse to be used as plant food. As she did in several other films (*Beach Blanket Bango, Country Hookers*, Ed Wood's *Necromania*), Rene appears opposite her then-paramour Ric Lutze, another exploitation movie veteran.

Something Weird Video offers a large selection of Rene's films, the ones that show her off to good advantage are *The Adult Version of Jekyll & Hyde, Teenage Fantasies, Country Hooker*, and the ever-popular *Necromania*.

The lead in the XXX-rated *Do You Wanna Be Loved?* (1974) was apparently Rene's last film role, afterwards, she dropped out of sight. One summer night in 1986, I happened to be watching a syndicated TV game show called *Break The Bank*. One of the contestants — a saucer-eyed woman with a bubbly personality — looked mighty familiar. Sure enough, it was Rene. And when she wound up winning the grand prize, the exuberance she displayed proved that her on-screen persona was merely a reflection of her off-screen self.

If you never sit through *Please Don't Eat My Mother!*, your life will not be any less enriched because of it. If, however, your tastes run toward lowbrow movies bereft of any redeeming social value, then the film is worth checking out for a glimpse of Rene Bond, a major figure in the history of minor cinema.

A very nice print, from the vault of Harry Novak, is available from Something Weird Video. Phone (206) 361-3759.

Reviewed by Ted Okuda

Jumping Jacks

(1952. Dir. by Norman Taurog. With Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Mona Freeman, Don DeFore, Robert Strauss, Dick Erdman, Marcy McGuire.)

As a Martin & Lewis vehicle, *Jumping Jacks* offers absolutely nothing new. But it is a lively, often pleasant and always noisy farce that showcases the team at the height of their fame. At this early stage of his career, Jerry Lewis is even more manic than usual, there are times when he nearly leaps off the screen and grabs you by the collar. Like him or not, you can't deny his energetic efforts to wring laughs from run-of-the-mill material.

Chick Allen (Martin), a paratrooper, asks his former song-and-dance partner Hap Smith (Lewis) to help out with a camp show. Chick and the other soldiers are staging. The general has threatened to discontinue these shows unless their quality improves, and Chick thinks that Hap is just the guy who can make things better.

Hap, a civilian who has a nightclub act with new partner Betty Carter (Mona Freeman), poses as a GI to participate in the show, presumably for one performance. However, the general is so pleased with the results that he arranges for the show—and Hap—to tour other service camps. Chick and his buddies fear that if the hoax is revealed they'll be up for a court-martial, so they pass Smith off as Private "Dogface"

(continued)

HOLLYWOOD BOOK & POSTER CO.

TV & film, rock & roll, and wrestling collectibles can be found at the

Hollywood Book & Poster Co.
6562 Hollywood Blvd.
Hollywood, CA 90028
(213) 465-8764

Posters • Photos • Press Kits
Lobby Cards • Scripts
And Much More
Buy • Sell • Trade
Bring Want Lists

Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 11-6
Fri.-Sat. 11-7, Sun. 12-5



Eric Caidin, our founding father.

Dolan, forcing the real Dolan (Dick Erdman) to go into hiding.

Now a paratroop trainee, Hap undergoes rigorous training, and his bungling inadvertently works in his favor; his accident prone behavior always happens to correspond with "correct" military conduct, earning him the admiration of the tough top sergeant (Robert Strauss). But Hap is anxious to return to civilian life, and tries, at every opportunity, to sneak away — though Chick is never far behind him.

Jumping Jacks adheres to the standard M&L movie formula. Jerry squeals, makes faces, runs around (seemingly in three directions at once), and gets into Big Trouble, while Dean sings a few tunes, romances the leading lady, and struggles to keep his goofy partner in line.

Although predictable, the comedy routines are often quite funny. In one scene Jerry blithely ignores proper procedure while learning how to pack a parachute, cutting the strings, he ties the parachute into one big, misshapen bundle. Another scene has Dick Erdman hiding under a dining table where Lewis, Martin, and Robert Strauss are seated, frantically trying to snatch food from their plates. Expert timing turns this simple bit into a comic highlight.

The training sequences (shot on location at the Army Paratrooper's Training Base at Fort Benning, Georgia) also produce a number of laughs, as the boys go through the expected paces, plunging from an assortment of practice jumping rigs. There's also five musical numbers tossed in for good measure, though none of the songs and their presentations are memorable.

With Dean and (particularly) Jerry dominating the proceedings, there isn't much for the rest of the cast to do, with Mona Freeman and Don DeFore handed thankless roles. Robert Strauss, however, is effective as the gruff sergeant who comes to regard Jerry as his prize pupil.

The amount of enjoyment you'll get from watching *Jumping Jacks* will depend on your fondness for the team. Their fans will be falling down from laughter, while non-fans will be falling asleep from boredom, assuming they haven't hit the "stop" button on their VCRs before then.

Available from Paramount Home Video.

Reviewed by Ted Okuda

Super Xuxa Contra Baixo Astral

(1988. Dir by Anna Penido. With Xuxa Meneghel, Jonas Torres, Guilherme Karam. Globo Video, available only in South America, PAL format.)

Anyone who channel surfs knows there's nothing quite like a Spanish-language TV variety show: the hyperkinetic, circus-like atmosphere, the cavernous, colorful sets, the brassy music, the shapely models who are practically spilling out of their skin-tight outfits, the platoon of dancers who leave no body part unshaken, and the plethora of audience-participation games. In the eye of this hurricane stands the host: a combination cheerleader, carnival barker, and ringmaster.

Spanish-language children's programs employ a slight variation of this basic format, and almost always have a female host. The most popular of these kiddie show hosts—and, in fact, the most popular entertainer in South America—is Xuxa Meneghel, better known simply as "Xuxa" (pronounced "Shoo-shah"). An attractive six-foot blonde, Xuxa scored a phenomenal success in her native Brazil with her high-energy kid's show, which features games, prizes, and lots of singing and dancing by Xuxa and her back-up team of female singer/dancers The Xuxetettes?) The legions of Xuxaphiles (both children and adults) treat her with such idolatry that you'd think she was a combination of Marilyn Monroe, The Beatles, and the Chicago Bulls all rolled up into one svelte package.

In 1993 Xuxa attempted to break into U.S. television with an English-language version of her series. These episodes weren't dubbed, Xuxa spoke English and had an audience comprised of American children. However, much of her peculiar charm was lost in the translation. Her less-than-fluid command of English (combined, perhaps, with the pressure of trying to conquer a foreign market) made her seem uncharacteristically ill-at-ease, while the American youngsters were often confused and overwhelmed by the razzle-dazzle production.

The failure of this syndicated series has, for the moment, nixed plans for future American ventures, which may have included the English-language release of Xuxa's 1988 feature film *Super Xuxa Contra Baixo Astral*. (Prior to her fame as a kiddie host, she appeared in *Love Strange Love* [1982], a very adult drama in which she played a prostitute who seduces an underage boy!) This is unfortunate, since *Super Xuxa* (the rough English translation for the title is *Super Xuxa Vs The Bad Vibe*) is a slickly-made musical fantasy that showcases Madame X to good advantage.

Xuxa essentially plays herself (or, more precisely, her TV self): a pretty, effervescent goodwill ambassador who is a friend to all children. The villain of the piece is a demon-like being named Baixo Astral (Guilherme Karam). From his underground lair, the Brazil nut infects the populace with bad vibes, resulting in violent, antisocial behavior. Angered that his efforts are continually being undermined by peppy do-gooder Xuxa (who is able to negate Baixo's spell with her perky personality), he kidnaps her beloved pet dog. Then our leggy heroine is literally sucked into Baixo Astral's gloomy netherworld, where she encounters several Muppet-style creatures before coming face-to-face with the nasty ol' bad vibe and his equally disagreeable henchmen (or henchTHINGS). Not unexpectedly, Xuxa emerges triumphant, defeating the baddies and restoring joy and happiness to the world.

Sitting through this film is pointless if you're not familiar with her TV show (and some may argue that it's pointless under any condition). On its own terms, however, Super Xuxa compares favorably to most so-called family pictures, and often outdistances them (consider the recent slew of Tom Arnold movies — oy vey!). Most of the scenes involving Xuxa — and that's nearly every frame of the film — look like a live-action cartoon or pages out of a children's book (Yurika Yamasaki's art direction employs bright and varied color schemes for these passages). By contrast, the scenes in Baixo Astral's underground lair are deliberately dark and gloomy. Visually, Super Xuxa comes across like an odd Brazilian mix of Alice in Wonderland and Hellraiser.

Though no great shakes as an actress, Xuxa is a genuinely appealing performer, she sings and dances (almost non-stop) with amazing vivacity (and extremely short shorts!), and always appears to be having a grand time.

The puppets on display in Super Xuxa (which include her pet dog, a dolphin, and a gang of fleas) may seem a bit lo-tech in the era of computer animation, but they are perfectly in keeping with the film's childlike approach, and recall the quaint puppetry found in American kiddie shows of the '50s and '60s.

If someone were ambitious (or foolhardy) enough to tackle a serious comprehensive study of South American cinema, *Super Xuxa Contra Baixo Astral* wouldn't even rate as a footnote. It's not so much a motion picture as it is another page in the Xuxa merchandising catalogue. But as a curio and an example of pure kitsch, it deserves some kind of video distribution outside of South America.

Reviewed by Ted Okuda

The Big Noise

(1944. Dir by Mal St. Clair. With Stan Laurel & Oliver Hardy, Arthur Space, Veda Ann Borg, Doris Merrick. Fox Home Video.)

Just mention *The Big Noise* to a fervent Laurel & Hardy fan, and you'll witness a look of revulsion unlike



any since Van Helsing flashed a crucifix at Count Dracula. Then brace yourself for a lecture about how wretched the post-Hal Roach L&H films are, about how 20th Century-Fox in particular went to great lengths to sabotage the team, and how their reputation as reliable laugh-makers was forever ruined.

That's all fine and well, if you don't mind a little fact-bending to support these opinions. Though the Fox product would have benefited tremendously had the studio made more allowances for Stan Laurel's behind-the-camera input, it's ridiculous to claim that a deliberate attempt was made to sabotage the team's career. And while the duo's '40s comedies are definitely among their weakest, the resulting films are not entirely without interest, or laughs. The fact that these pictures turned a profit is often (and conveniently) overlooked, the films are certainly not in the same league as their classic comedies, but they apparently pleased somebody. *The Bullfighters*, released by Fox in 1945, was their last American film because Stan and Ollie decided to call it quite—not the studios or the moviegoing public. That they were able to survive as a screen team for nearly 20 years, in spite of the later substandard entries and the rise of Abbott & Costello, says a lot about their staying power.

During their years at the Hal Roach studio, Laurel & Hardy turned out one brilliant comedy after another. Efforts like *Two Tars* (1928), *Liberty* (1929), *Hog Wild* (1930), *The Music Box* (1932), *Sons of the Desert* (1934), and *Way Out West* (1937) are bonafide comic masterpieces. After *Saps At Sea* (1940), their last Roach production, the boys signed with 20th Century-Fox. Beginning with the uneven *Great Guns* (1941), the Fox films mark an overall decline in the quality of their work. For years, many fans and scholars have dismissed the entire group as "unwatchable."

To the dismay of "purists," There's a growing number of admirers who believe their '40s efforts haven't been given a fair shake. To be sure, *A-Haunting We Will Go* (Fox, 1945), is a near-complete waste of time, and *Nothing But Trouble* (MGM, 1944) seems more like Nothing But Tedium. However, the others offer moments of fun. Fleeting moments, perhaps, but undeniable fun nonetheless.

Which brings us back to *The Big Noise*, usually singled out as the absolute rock-bottom, get-out-the-trash-bag, stinkeroo L&H picture. It isn't, not by a long shot. But because of the automatic knee-jerk rejection of the film by many L&H historians, the film's merits (albeit relatively few) have gone unheralded.

Stan and Ollie play janitors who pass themselves off as detectives when Prof. Alva Hartley (Arthur Space), an eccentric inventor, wants someone to guard his new bomb, "The Big Noise." Hartley's house is rigged with

(continued)

Horror for the Holidays

Hammer Films: An Exhaustive Filmography

Tom Johnson *and* Deborah Del Vecchio

422pp. $65 library binding (7 × 10) ISBN 0-7864-0034-X 236 photos, bibliography, notes, index

"Excellent"—*Psychotronic;* "takes every film Hammer studios ever released, describes it, analyzes it, annotates it with production notes, and critically assesses it"—*Monsters from the Vault;* "impressive"—*Classic Images;* "one of the best"—*Little Shoppe of Horrors.*



Peter Cushing in *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1969)



Blaisdell (right) and Bob Burns with props from *Invasion of the Saucer Men* (1957)

Paul Blaisdell, Monster Maker

A Biography of the B Movie Makeup and Special Effects Artist

Randy Palmer

304pp. $42.50 lib bdg. ISBN 0-7864-0270-9 56 photos, filmography, appendix, index

"A fascinating story told with the sort of verve and panache that is needed, but at the same time, with a strong attention to detail"—*Classic Images;* "a tremendous resource for his die hard fans...the last word on Blaisdell's life and his ability to make movie monsters from scratch"—*Fangoria.*

McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers

Box 611 • Jefferson NC 28640 • (910) 246-4460 • FAX (910) 246-5018 • *Orders only* 800-253-2187



an assortment of push-button gadgets that confuse the boys — though not as much as Hartley's family, which include an obnoxious brat (former Our Gang member and future *In Cold Blood* star Bobby Blake) and dotty aunt (Esther Howard). When a gang of crooks decide to steal the bomb and sell it to enemy agents, Stan and Ollie head to Washington with a "decoy" bomb. En route, of course, they discover they're actually in possession of the genuine article, and desperately try to elude the crooks, who are now in hot pursuit.

Unlike other L&H features from this period, *The Big Noise* doesn't saddle the team with a lot of unnecessary baggage. The boy-girl subplot involving Arthur Space and Fox contract starlet Doris Merrick is kept to a minimum (it would have been difficult to turn Space's goofy character into a true romantic lead), and there are no specialty acts or musical numbers to pad out the length. Most of the time, the focus is squarely on the comedians. There are fond throwbacks to earlier routines, as they present their on-going mix-up of derbies, and such familiar bits as Ollie climbing a signpost and discovering a "WET PAINT" sign at the top.

On the other hand, *The Big Noise* is almost *too* full of routines. While one can admire the sheer quantity of gags, quality is a different matter, as the gags are heaped upon one another with little thyme or reason. Even in their most plotless films, the humor sprang from their unique brand of illogical logic. Here, they're a couple of dolts who simply wander through a succession of events.

Laurel, the creative force behind the team, was accustomed to the freedom afforded him at the Hal Roach studio. At Roach, Stan went to great lengths to make sure the material was played for maximum impact. If a gag didn't come off properly, there was little hesitation on Stan's part to re-film it completely. At Fox, the comedian was confronted by a Hollywood studio system at the height of its power. This system, which wasn't sympathetic to an actor's creative suggestions to begin with, valued deadlines over aesthetics, and any suggestion that might throw production off schedule, even to the slightest degree, was summarily rejected.

Accordingly, Stan often seems listless in the post-Roach films. Frustrated by his lack of input and supervision, Stan's performances are indifferent; most of the time he comes across merely as an actor-for-hire, which was, no doubt, Fox's shortsighted view of this gifted filmmaker.

Amidst these creative constrictions, however, Oliver Hardy rises to the challenge. Much of the contrived material isn't worthy of him, but you'd never know it to watch his enthusiastic performance. His "camera looks" (glancing at the audience, registering surprise or dismay over something Stan's done) are often hilarious, and his energy level makes old and stale gags seem fresh and funny. Ironically, Hardy's attempts to make the best of a generally bad situation distinguishes *The Big Noise* as one of his shining hours.

The Big Noise is now available as part of Fox Video's discount "Selections" series (the suggested retail price on all titles in this series is $9.95). The video transfer, taken from 35mm material, is breathtaking; while it may not be the best L&H comedy on the market, it's certainly one of the best-looking.)

After all is said and done, the film is not an entirely unpleasant way to kill 74 minutes. While it's a far cry from past glories, this film doesn't deserve all the scorn hurled its way. Their worst film? Hardly. One of the worst comedies ever made? Not as long as Pauly Shore keeps cranking 'em out.

Reviewed by Ted Okuda

Batman Serials

[*Batman* (1943. Directed by Lambert Hillyer. Starring Lewis Wilson, J. Carrol Naish, Douglas Croft, Shirley Patterson. *Batman And Robin* (1949). Directed by Spencer Bennet. Starring Robert Lowery, John Duncan, Jane Adams, Lyle Talbot. Goodtimes Home Video release. Both are 15-chapter serials on two cassettes each.]

The 1943 serial *Batman* has a widespread reputation for being a ludicrously funny exercise in political incorrectness. It was reissued theatrically in the 1960s, capitalizing on the success of the campy television series. With the release of Tim Burton's *Batman* in 1989, the old serials were brought out of hibernation again.

In 1974, when Columbia Pictures assembled a package of old Three Stooges shorts (*The Three Stooges Follies*) for the midnight-show and college circuit, they threw in Chapter 1 of *Batman*. The serial's reputation seems to rest on this one episode, which is rife with World War II propaganda, zombies, ray-gun weaponry, alligators, an Oriental mastermind played by an Irishman, and two comic-book heroes who look downright silly. "The somber costume, which has struck terror into the heart of many a swaggering denizen of the underworld," is poorly designed and its pale colors don't look like the familiar Batman disguise. When Batman crashes through a window, he clumsily stumbles. An undercranked camera accelerates movement comically as our heroes trot into action, and Batman beckons to Robin with a delicate swish of his hand. When the Caped Crusader falls from a rooftop, a slide-whistle sounds as he foolishly flails his arms in front of a process screen.

Fortunately, the rest of the serial is somewhat more straightforward. The production improves as it progresses. By Chapter 6, Batman's costume has been redesigned with its proper colors and proportions, and veteran actors Charles Middleton and George J. Lewis have joined the cast. From Chapter 10 forward, there are excellent cliffhangers, with Chapters 12 and 13 being particularly effective. (The latter has a rare double peril, as Batman is crushed between advancing walls of spikes while his girlfriend is subjected to a sinister brain operation!)

Columbia had an annoying habit of building up to a suspenseful chapter ending, and at the moment of truth a gong would sound to introduce scenes from the next episode. The suspense was lessened by seeing the imperiled hero out of danger, obviously alive and well. The dreaded Columbia gong is struck in *Batman*, but sensibly the preview scenes don't always feature the hero, so there is reasonable doubt that he will escape from his plight of the week. (The hero survives so many perils that the opposition begins to think there is more than one Batman!)

"Sensible" is a good way to describe Lambert Hillyer's direction. Hillyer, a veteran of 1920s William S. Hart and Buck Jones westerns, occasionally uses silent-film technique to tell the story. The pulp-fiction aspects of the script are reinforced with appropriate close-ups and reaction shots. A flophouse sequence uses numerous fast cuts (and no sound) to keep it moving. When the action shifts to an outdoor location for three chapters, with Charles Middleton playing a feisty, solemn-faced miner (similar to Hart), Hillyer is in his element. There is one spectacular special effect—a car being camouflaged while in motion—which the director achieves by an ingenious trick involving light and shadow. Lambert Hillyer is the real hero of *Batman*.

Lewis Wilson and Douglas Croft portray Batman and Robin, and their alter egos Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson. Wilson and Croft also improve gradually. Wilson isn't bad as the wealthy wastrel — sort of like Larry Parks with a New England accent—but his light, playful tone doesn't fit the heroic Caped Crusader.

The Japanese villain is a caricature and J. Carrol Naish plays it that way. "So good, so nice," he coos when things go his way, treating his henchman to round of snake. He reads reams of treasonous dialogue from cue cards in a measured monotone. When he feeds his pet alligators, Naish giggles in dialect — and sounds like Bugs Bunny! Yet he is a worthy adversary, and maintains viewer interest.

Apart from the leading players (Wilson, Croft, Naish and ingenue Shirley Patterson), none of the cast receives billing. William Austin is a dainty, fluttery Alfred, chauffeuring the dynamic duo to their various appointments with death, and Charles Wilson is good as a peevish police captain. The usual familiar faces fill out the show: Stanley Price, Robert Fiske, Dick Curtis, George Chesebro, etc.

This Goodtimes Home Video edition of *Batman* (which has been withdrawn from distribution, though old copies turn up from time to time through discount outlets) uses an alternate version of the serial that has been re-edited for this era of political correctness. The script's literally slanted remarks about "the shifty eyed Japs" have been removed, and new, modified narration (by Gary Owens) takes its place.

Batman was a huge hit, particularly for a serial In 1949, when Columbia wanted to follow up its superman serial, producer Sam Katzman came through with *Batman and Robin* This time the title roles were taken by Robert Lowery and John Duncan, with the ingenue part played by Jane Adams All were familiar from lower-case feature films of the 1940s Lyle Talbot confidently portrayed Commissioner Gordon, with Katzman regulars Rick Vallin, Leonard Penn (Sean's dad) and Don Harvey as various unsavory characters

It was common practice for serial producers to cram as many gimmicks and stunts as possible into the first few chapters These sample episodes would attract theatrical bookings and viewer interest *Batman and Robin* apparently won playdates on the strength of its title, because unfortunately for action fans, nothing much happens during the first half of the serial The dynamic duo chases the crooks from here to there, but a sketchy script and pedestrian action sequences slow things down The stunts are disappointing, Batman's dangerous leaps are shown in close shots, so we don't see anything daring

For some strange reason, the serial wakes up in the middle The pace quickens tremendously in Chapter 8, with whirlwind fights and more impressive stunt work The supporting cast also changes, with henchman Don Harvey suddenly being written out, and character actors Ralph Graves and Michael Whalen just as suddenly appearing Toward the end of the serial, co-writer Joseph Poland borrows from his 1941 script for Republic's cliffhanger *Dick Tracy Vs Crime, Inc* , as the mysterious masked criminal becomes invisible for the last few chapters Former Republic serial director Spencer Bennet guides *Batman and Robin* adequately

Batman and Robin is more sober than the average Columbia serial, so there aren't the usual amusing implausibilities At Columbia it was customary for a serial hero to take on six men simultaneously, Batman more reasonably tackles three at a time But there are a few howlers peculiar to Columbia The masked "Wizard" has a strange hypnotic glare which looks more stupthan intimidating A steamy gas, "CO2," incapacitates our heroes, in reality, CO2 is carbon dioxide, which is colorless and harmless Narrator Knox Manning misreads a word in his script when Batman and Robin overake a train, according to Manning they *overhaul* the train! A most surprising gaffe involvas an actor chipping Robert Lowery on the chin "That hurt!" barks Lowery, and he returns the favor! (Lowery didn't especially enjoy playing his strenuous role, according to sidekick John Duncan—who strapped Lowery into a girdle at the beginning of each day's shooting Holly midriff bulge, Batman!)

Print quality of this Goodtimes release (which has also been withdrawn) is good throughout, and although there is some mild surface noise on the soundtrack in the final quarter, the picture and sound are fine

Reviewed by Scott MacGillivray

Tower of the Screaming Virgins

(1971, Maron Films Dir Francois Legrand (Franz Antel) With Jean Piat and Terry Torday Original title La Tour De Nesle.)

The pre-credits sequence of this Franco-German co-production is a stunner Young men (who turn out to be the screaming virgins in question) run around a dark dungeon set that looks like it was designed by M C Escher They are killed one at a time by hooded pursuers One of the killers uses a bow and arrow After the last poor sap is dispatched, the camera pulls back to reveal the main assassin is a woman wearing only hood, hose and heels Then it gets better the credits come up, the title appears, and the next screen tells you that this little ditty is "based on the novel by Alexandre Dumas " (Explosive burst of hysterical laughter.)

You'd figure the film couldn't possibly top itself now, and, unfortunately, you'd be right Turn out the film really IS based on a Dumas story, and is in fact the third film version (the other two having been made in 1937 and 1954) What we have here is essentially The Three Musketeers with some T&A to spice up the mix Captain Buridan, a seventeenth-century James Bond, travels to Paris to protect the honor of the beauteous Blanche Dubois Meanwhile, the Queen (who had a thing going with Buridan way back when) and two of her ladies-in-waiting have been pulling a preying mantis routine at the Tower of Sin, getting their kicks with young aristocrats stupid enough to set foot in a place called the Tower of Sin, and then doing away with them Blanche winds up as a lady-in waiting, and also becomes the recipient of the unwanted attentions of Count St Lorraine, the Queen's evil counselor It's up to Buridan to set things right, and the bodies start piling up

All in all, the film is really a strange brew great costumes, lush sets, swashbuckling action and a convoluted plot mixed with exploitation elements and variable dubbing The pace drags here and there, and you never really warm to any of the characters Buridan is too cocksure (in every sense of the word) to be properly sympathetic, and the fact that half the people he's supposed to save get killed doesn't say much for his abilities as a hero And the film never quite gets back to the dementia of its opening minutes (though it does its best at the climax) Still, as a curiosity, it's hard to dislike

It's available from Sinister Cinema

Reviewed by David Annandale

Ghost Story

(Wide Screen Edition) 1981 saw Peter Straub's best selling novel *Ghost Story* cinematically enacted by a cast that most movie goers would consider dreams are

(continued)

KIT NATIVADAD
in
BANGERS
"SCREAM
ALICE
SCREAM !
IT WILL DO YOU NO GOOD!"
AN
EROTIC
THRILLER
Plutonium Film, Inc
8055 Lankershim #2C M
North Hollywood, Ca 91605
SALE PRICE $24.95 Postpaid
RATED-R

E.I. INDEPENDENT CINEMA
Indepandant Motion Pictures Marketing
P.O. Box 371 Glenwood N.J. 07418 U.S.A. 973-509-9352 fax 973-746-6464
SPECIAL PRICES FOR CULT MOVIE READERS!!
VAMPIRE CHICK-PAK! $29.99ea. or $99.99 for all 5!!
CARESS OF THE VAMPIRE LESBIAN VAMPIRES
CARESS OF THE VAMPIRE 2 Teenage Ghoul A Go-Go
ADDICTED TO MURDER
VOODOO SOUP
VAMPS DEADLY DREAMGIRLS
$29.99 ea. or any 3 for $59.98
DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRLS
JUGULAR WINE
FANGS A HISTORY OF VAMPIRES IN THE MOVIES
THE "KILL ME SLOW" PAK
WEIRD BIZARRE and UNCANNY LOW LOW LOW BUDGET EXPLOITATION
ANY 5 PICTURED BELOW - $19.99ea or all 6 for $100
VEGAS BLOOD BATH
PSYCHO SISTERS ('95)
KILL ME SLOWLY
VIDEO PSYCHO
SACRIFICE WHITE GODDESS
URBAN WEREWOLF
also avail.. FULL LINE OF W.A.V.E. EXPLOITATION-FILMS including STRANGLED ..29.99 - STRANGLED II ..29.99 STRANGLED 3 ..29.99 VIRGIN SACRIFICE ..29.99 - HUMO JURY ..29.99 PSYCH CHARLIE RETURNS PT.1 ..29.99 SLAUGHTERED SOCIALITES ..29.99 - SLAUGHTERED 20 CNTARIES ..29.99 - RANA & THE NITE OF TERROR ..29.99 DEU HELL ..29.99 DAMSEL IN DIS-TRESS ..$29.99 SLAUGHTERED SOCIALITES ..29.99 DEAD IN THE POOL ..29.99 all new '97 CATALOG ..$1.99
COMING SOON
PSYCHO SISTERS: Beyond Madness (JJ North) - VAMPYRE - VAMPIRE'S EMBRACE - SENSOUS VAMPIRE LOVERS - CARESS OF THE VAMPIRE 3 - CUTTING MOMENTS
TO ORDER, Please print Title(s), Address and send Payment to:
E.I. CINEMA Dept. CM, P.O. Box 371, Glenwood, N.J. 07418
Postage - Add $4.50 first tape, $2.50 each add. / All Tapes NTSC-SP / CATALOG $5./
International - U.S. FUNDS ONLY add $20.00/ No Refunds. / Exchanges for defects only.
CREDIT CARD ORDERS! 973-509-9352 for info!



Fred Astaire stars in Ghost Story, *newly re-mastered and letterboxed from MCA*

made of. Any time you have distinguished actors such as Patricia Neal, Fred Astaire, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., John Houseman, and Melvin Douglass working together, you can expect epic performances.

In *Ghost Story*, they come as close as they can in delivering their foremost and final performances. Fred Astaire, Doug Fairbanks, John Houseman and Melvin Douglas play the aging members of a 1920s quasi-fraternity (or extreme testosterone brotherhood), the Chowder Society. These four guys fall for one woman, if you're ready to believe that. She, because of her ethereal presence, teases the Chowder Society into testostorone overdrive, which unfortunately results in her death. This is the premise of the show.

While this kind of scripting adheres to the Stephen King school of mystery, sci-fi, and horror writing, at times it becomes convoluted and unclear. What this picture has going for it is amazing winter scenery, and some great performances by some old pros (for two of the cast members, this is their final credit).

MCA's re-mastered letterboxed version is far more satisfying than any flat pan-and-scan version which have been around on TV and cable. Finally, we get to see the disembodied, voices, and the color corrected.

If the reader is a fan of this film, then this new re-mastered version is a must. If one is unfamiliar with the atory, perhaps a rental would be more in line. This is the best video release of this film since ite original theatrical release, on Laser Disc from MCA home video. Suggested retail price $39.98.

Reviewed by Jan Alan Henderson

Lumiere Brothers' First Films

(1997, Kino on Video) On March 19, 1895, Auguste and Louis Lumiere filmed the workers of their factory leaving for the day, and this image will forever mark the beginning of cinema. The first public screenings of the Lumiere Brothers' films took place on December 28, 1895 at the Salon Indien of the Grand Cafe in Paris, and within months, the Lumiere cameramen were dispatched throughout the world to capture images for the screen. This video is an anthology of the most significant and captivating of these films, organized and edited by Thierry Fremaux, Director of the Institut Lumiere. Some films will be familiar (*The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat, Demolition of a Wall, A Sprinkler Sprinkled*), but many are rarely seen today. Breath-taking cinematography illuminates the Moscow, New York, Paris, Saigon and Jerusalem of the late 19th Century, while fascinating vignettes of the French middle class at play and early experimente in comedy shorts clearly demonstrate the Brothers' singular artistic touch and adventurous spirit. One hundred years later, these images still have a profound effect on the viewer.

Kino on Video, in association with the Institut Lumiere, presents this journey through the birth of the motion picture, narrated by French director Bertrand Tavernier. Eighty-five "actualities" (filmed between 1895 and 1897, culled from the more than 1,500 made by the Lumieres) have been mastered from original 35mm material. The quality and range of the images, generally seen in badly duped copies until now, are at once apparent in this first ever authorized video presentetion of the Brothers' films in the U. S. This is a delightful intro to the history of cinema and essential for all libraries and film enthusiaste.

From Kino On Video, phone (212)629-6880, FAX (212)714-0871. Their website address is http://www.kini.com.

Reviewed by Gino Colbert

The Werewolf of Washington

(1973, Diplomat Pictures. Written, Directed, and Edited by Milton Moses Ginsberg. Produced by Nina Schulman. With Dean Stockwell, Bigg McGuire, Clifton James, Beeson Carroll, Michael Dunn. MPAA Rating PG. Color, 90 min.)

Many years ago, back in the truncated reign of the evil King Dick (when locuste and plague dogs chewed the land and the Potomac sky was black with carrion birds), M.M. Ginsberg had cause to make and attempt to release this tepid burlesque. For those too young to remember, our 37th President (bearing the W.C. Fieldsian name, Richard Milhouse Nixon) was a sweaty, twitching, much-defeated career politician elected in 1968 to the highest, most puissant office in the land by a good less than half of those bothering to vote. A vain, ugly, and humorless man, this Nixon was chased from power by a political scandal called "Watergate" (father to the numberless "gates" theresfter). Bugging, wire-taps, and assorted dirty tricks from the CIA playbook were necessitated by Nixon's certainty that enemies existed everywhere, plotting to undo him and the American Way of Life that made him inaviteble.

Paranoia being a national tredition, there are many Nixonian Old Believere about, and most of them write for weekly magazines. Their hero is now an effective world figure (the fact that we was elected twice on the promise to end the same war is a plus, as was the Christmas bombing of Vietnamese civilians) who recognized China (this is aided by the suspicion that not even Rush Limbaugh could find it on an unmarked map of the world), and is thus the full peer of Reagan in his country's esteem. Our opinion leadere are nothing if not forgiving.

In this film a young, pro-administration reporter (Dean Stockwell) is bundled off to Hungary after an affair with the President's daughter. He is bitton by a wolf, warned of his fate by a gypsy woman, and heaved onto a plane to America, there to drudge as the assistant press secretary to the same President (Biff McGuire as a bluff, sloganeering nitwit in whose weakling machismo is a fair likeness of Tricky Dick's). Soon, there is much blood in the gutters of Pennsylvania Avenue and official spokesmen blame the Black Panthere...

Whenever any movie goes off the decp end of narrative coherence, abandoning any hope of a mainstream audience, something miraculous happens. Every botched camera set-up, every inept gulp of dialogue takes on a larger meaning. The things that remind the viewer that s/he is watching an ill-assorted group of artists do their best with a punk script are lifted from the realm of everyday competence and take us to an aesthetically rewarding level of perfect dementia. The workings of anti-genius are impressive to watch and Stockwell knew from the first day that all concerned "had a major disaster" on their hands.

M.M. Ginsberg's first film, *Coming Apart* (1969) was a slice of verite nightmarishness involving a stationary camera, a two way mirror, and Rip Torn as a psychiatrist. The experience sufficed to unhinge Ginsberg as a metteur-en-scene. The auteur has any number of things to say about the connection betwecn American politics and the eating of human flesh, but seems to have bitten off his own tongue in empathy. The script sounds like the supreme literary effort of an aging horror fan who thinks he's Oscar Wilde and is, as such, just dumb enough to play a month of weekends off-Broadway. The direction is 1940's Monogram standard—an ill-lit dead-head stare that lays bare every gliteh, stutter, and substandard line reading. Were not the field so crowded with contenders, Werewolf would be a fair bid at establishing Ginsberg as the Ed Wood of the 1970's.

The cast values are better than the usual C-grade programmer and reflect the furious scramble for roles that accompanied the final collapse of studio filmmaking the decade before. Stockwell, brilliant in any number of memorably twisted films (*Compulsion*; *Wrong Is Right*, *Married to the Mob*) is game, but his performance falls short of his work with Jonathan Demme and Wim Wenders. Clifton James bitches and croaks briefly as the Attorney-General and the magnificent Michael Dunn conducts irrelevant monster experimente in the White House basement. The film was indifferently released in 1973, attracted some favorable attention at the 1974 London Film Festival, and wound-up a "midnight movie" on HBO in 1976.

You can get *Werewolf* (and many other slices of prime lunacy) from Phil Palmieri at Creature Features Video, PO Box 602, Northford, CT 06472. Write for catalog or visit website at:

http://members.aol.com./CFVhorrors/cvfimports.html

Reviewed by Ronald Dale Garmon

All About Teri Weigel

(1997, color Directed by Gino Colbert. With Teri Weigel, Veronica Brazil, Dave Nelson, Bill Flagstaff, Heather Hart From New Age Pictures)

Forget any preconceptions you may have about shot-on-video adult fare Producer/director Gino Colbert has put together a new kind of explicit sex film here, one that delivers the goods in sizzling style!

Former *Playboy Magazine* centerfold, Teri Weigel starts moaning, groaning and wiggling that hot saucy behind before anyone even sets a hand on her! The action only gets steamier from that point on Veronica Brazil and Rod Garetto turn in an unbelievable performance that'll need to be seen again several times.

Several months back, Colbert arranged for his production to be shown theatrically at Laemmle's Sunset 5 hers in Los Angeles Video projection equipment was brought in and the show was run on the big screen on Friday and Saturday as a midnighter for many weeks During that time, word-of-mouth built this film into an attraction that was playing to sell-out crowds every performance By contrast, *Showgirls*, also playing as a midnighter in the next auditorium, was attracting only 20 to 30 people per showing Perhaps the era of the adults-only theater isn't quite over

Released by New Age Pictures, it's now available at most video stores carrying adult product No mail-order as of this writing

Reviewed by Art Lowrie

Crimson

(1972, color With Paul Naschy) Naschy is top-billed as "Paul Nash" in this worst-of-any Wizard Video release of a Eurocine Production Naschy does not dub his own voice, nor does he have much screen time, and when he does, it is not quality He plays a gangster leader who is shot in the head during the getaway in a jewelry heist, and taken by his accomplices to a doctor in the country. The gang guns down a rival gang's leader known as The Sadist who talks tough around women and slaps them around a bit (otherwise he doesn't seem to be such a bad guy) His brain is than transplanted into Naschy's head

Naschy takes on sadistic tendancies and attacks an adolescent girl who delivers newspapers on her bicycle Than he attacks the doctor's wife But the direction and script are inept, making the outcome unappealing and lame Naschy's sadistic new brain can do no greater damage than to rip his victims' clothing There is no nudity or consummated rape as would be expected in a Eurocine' production Cut? The print doesn't appear to be too choppy, though plenty grainy and with glitches

Crimson is produced as a horror film within a gangster crime melodrama backdrop Seen are Eurocine supporting regulars in 1970s equivalent of 1930s gangster attire, pin stripes with wide ties and bellbottoms The movie does not even begin to succeed for suspense and thrills like Karloff's *The Walking Dead* or *Black Friday*—films which certainly seem to have influenced this picture There is nothing noteworthy about the FX in the brain transplant operation, just the obligatory spurts of blood

Eurocine's familiar female la-la vocals music soundtrack (with spaghetti Western-style guitar thrown in) put the viewer in a more tolerant mood to sit through this But should you manage to get to the end, you'll feel bad for having wasted 85 minutes of you life Best, if to be undertaken at all, in multiple sittings Even Paul Naschy completists can do without this one Naschy only lends himself to this to help fund his own projects

On the package cover is uninspired artwork of Naschy's bandaged and bleeding head held in mid-air by a hand gripping the hair

Reviewed by Tom French

If you sell books, movie posters, videos, model kits, rare photos, masks, magazines or anything pertaining to the world of cult movies, we can help! Your ad in *Cult Movies* will be read by thousands of fans who are actively seeking just such items as you sell. Let the world know about you!!! Advertising in *Cult Movies* is economical and highly effective. Givs us a try, you'll be glad you did!

Send for a rate card today!
Cult Movies Magazine
6201 Sunset Blvd.,
Suite 152
Hollywood CA 90028

Cult Movies Collector Videos

On The Trail of Ed Wood



Please send me On The Trail of Ed Wood. Enclosed is $9.95.

Name_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Mail to:
Cult Movies Magazine • 6201 Sunset Blvd • Suite 152 • Hollywood CA 90028

A one-hour documentary on the unusual life of the man dubbed "The World's Worst Filmmaker!" Host Conrad Brooks, who appeared in such films as Plan 9 From Outer Space and Glen Or Glenda? spins a web of fascination with stories never before told!
$9.95 • VHS Only • Free Shipping!

Paul Blaisdell, Monster Maker

Biography by Randy Palmer
Forewords by Fred Olen Ray and Bob Burns
(from McFarland and Company, $42.50)

This is one of the best books I've ever read about behind-the-scenes Hollywood. It does exactly what a McFarland book should do—greatly increase your store of knowledge. Up until now, my primary source for information on Blaisdell was the May 1990 issue of *Cinefantastique*. That's a fine issue and the color photos are a must-have but I had the false impression that I was well informed.

Hoo-boy. This guy did a lot more for AIP than only his most famous monsters—or I should say fantastic monsters. Palmer has done a good job as a film historian and reminds us not only of the man's work that is so often forgotten but also fills us in on Blaisdell's efforts on projects that never reached the light of day.

Fred Olen Ray is the ideal choice to lead off this book not only because he's a long time fan and provider of many of the photos, but because he is a contemporary Hollywood maverick. He can really empathize with Blaisdell. Books about monster makers who were basically employees of the big boys can't be as interesting as the life story recounted here. Employees have financial security. They have great materials with which to work. They have talent but they don't need to live by their wits. Blaisdell did. (Note: Fred almost worked with Blaisdell on his second feature, *The Alien Dead*. The story is recounted in this book. Fred worked a tribute to Blaisdell into a recent film, *Little Miss Magic*. A ghost has the head design of the alien slave from *Beast With A Million Eyes*!)

Before reading this book, I had thought the primary villain in Blaisdell's life was Sam Arkoff or someone like him, a Hollywood producer type who abandoned Paul when fashions changed. Not to say all that didn't happen, but Paul Blaisdell was the guy who lived by his wits. He weathered that storm.

No, the villain wasn't some Hollywood archetype. The bad guy was a businessman from the heartland. A crook from Iowa. A printer who deliberately torched his own building after using Blaisdell's *Fantastic Monsters* magazine to establish a national publication, thereby increasing the value of his operation and making off with a sweeter insurance settlement.

There were only two competitors to Forry Ackerman's original *Famous Monsters of Filmland* that were first rate: *Castle of Frankenstein* and Blaisdell's *Fantastic Monsters*. The latter had one advantage the others couldn't match. AIP's monster-maker kept all of his creations except the three-eyed mutant from *Day The World Ended*. Paul's *FM* was doing very well and the sales kept going up. He and his friend Bob Burns invested heavily in the magazine but everything was going to be OK because the magazine was a hit. And then the printer lit a match.

That effectively ended Blaisdell's career, even more than AIP's indifference. After all, AIP let him use his monsters in *Fantastic Monsters*, including clips from the trailers for film reels he sold through the magazine. He must have felt that he was still in business when he made the cliff monster for one of the film shorts and it joined his roster of great creations, including the Saucer Men and the She Creature.

The really interesting thing about Blaisdell is that he continued making monsters even when AIP wasn't paying him. This quality of the man communicated itself to all of us who stayed up to see these odd and endearing films on late, late TV. What these monsters lacked in high-tech (by 1950s standards) they made up for in pure imagination. Lots of famous stories are told in this book. And there are loads of amusing incidents about things he did when he wasn't making monsters; such as the various miniature or over-sized props used in Bert I. Gordon's films on transparent giantism. If something looked good in a Gordon flick, Blaisdell was probably the reason.

Reading this may inspire digging out the videos and watching these films again. Just before writing this, I checked out *The She Creature*. The characters were far more interesting and manic than the stock characters who went up against the more expensive Lagoon Creature costume over at Universal. Somehow, Blaisdell's imaginative and surrealistic monster was just right for a movie that introduced kids to adult themes along with a sexually charged monster. Good old AIP.

Reviewed by Brad Linaweaver

From Writer/Director/Producer Kevin J. Lindenmuth Come Three CHILLING Tales Of Horror!



The Alien Agenda: Endangered Species

Directed by Ron Ford, Gabe Campisi, Tim Ritter, and Kevin Lindenmuth

"An ambitious series!"
-WORLD OF FANDOM

"Lindenmuth is a name to watch!"
-THE NEW YORK POST

YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH!

In an ironic twist of fate, Tabloid-TV reporter Megan Cross while interviewing "alien abductees," has a too-close encounter with the extraterrestrials. Unable to turn to her boyfriend for help - as he might be one of the creatures - she abandons her life to work at an organization called "The Complex," a facility that secretly keeps tabs on the extraterrestrial activity.

Joining her in her struggle to save humanity is Fritz, an operative who has mysteriously reappeared in Las Vegas after a five-year disappearance, and Cope Ransom (Joel D. Wynkoop, *CREEP*), a world weary mercenary who must infiltrate the mutant-infested wasteland that is now Florida. Together they discover the terrifying secret about the invaders.

Get ENDANGERED SPECIES for just $29.95, plus $4 s/h!

The Alien Agenda: Out Of The Darkness



Directed by Mick McCleery and Kevin Lindenmuth

"Sci-fi spectacular that will keep you entertained throughout!"
-SCREAMCRAFT MAGAZINE

NOMINATED FOR FOUR B-MOVIE THEATER AWARDS, including BEST B-MOVIE OF 1996!

THE INVASION HAS ALREADY BEGUN...

The invaders come from the distant future. By instilling fear and paranoia through their experiments, they plan to claim our world.

In 2030, an isolated man has pieced together stolen alien technology to create a gateway into the past. In 1985, a man flees from the law, blamed for murders his double committed. While in 1997, a runaway meets the man of her nightmares - who isn't a man at all. Can the survivor stop the alien's agenda? Can he escape his future? Or will he be another victim, consumed by the darkness?

Get *OUT OF* THE DARKNESS for just $29.95, plus $4 s/h!

Get Both ALIEN AGENDAs for just $49.95 plus $4 s/h!

Addicted To Murder

#1 BEST *OUTLAW MOVIE* IN 1996!
-Cinefantastique

What happens when a serial killer encounters someTHING far worse than himself? SomeTHING that may be responsible for the killer he is?

What makes JOEL WINTER different is his special childhood friend, a woman named RACHAEL - a VAMPIRE name RACHAEL. From the forests of Michigan to the streets of New York City and Chicago, Joel tries to recapture this strange relationship in his adult life. When he meets ANGIE (Sasha Graham) at a suspiciously-named bar called "THE HUNGER," he finds someone like his lost love for ANGIE isn't human either. But as his health starts to fail and the killings start again, JOEL begins to question his life - and his death - and what exactly the evil Angie is up to. Two vampires in one lifetime is not a coincidence. The more he's drawn into the vampiric vortex, the more he becomes aware of his own horror.



$19.95 plus $4 s/h!

To Order send check/m.o. payable to
BRIMSTONE PRODUCTIONS
3 W. 102 #4B • New York, NY 10025
Phone/Fax 212-662-1084

The biggest collaboration of independent underground directors - starring Sasha Graham, Debbie Rochon, Joe Zaso, Joel Wynkoop and Scooter McCrae. With appearances by Jeffrey Arsenault (*NIGHT OWLS*), Nathan Thompson (*CONTACT BLOW*), Mike Gingold (*FANGORIA*).

Be part of the invasion...before it finds you!

NOW OVER 1,400 TAPES OF TERROR

Your Video Source for the Best Quality, Selection and Service Since 1983! Now Over 1,400 Horror, Exploitation, Sexploitation, Slasher, Cult, Sleaze, Eurotrash, Gore, Adult Classics, Obscure Cinema, Hong Kong Action/ Fantasy, Sci-Fi, and Many Hard-to-Find Rarities! $20 each, plus $3 s & h. (Add $1 each additional tape.) We Ship Worldwide! Order before sunset!
ORDER 6 VIDEOS & GET THE 7th FREE!NO LIMIT!

- The Abductors ('71) Chen Caffaro in Bondage!
- Alien Prey ('83/British) Alien & two lesbians
- Angels' Wild Women ('72) Regina Carroll
- Baba Yaga ('69/Italian) Carroll Baker, Witchcraft
- Bad Taste ('88) Peter Jackson dir / unrated Euro version
- The Beauties & the Beast ('73) Uschi Digard
- A Bell From Hell ('73/Italian) Vivaca Lindfors
- The Best of Sex & Violence('81) Carradine hosts
- The Beyond ('81/ Uncut) Lucio Fulci directs
- The Black Room ('81) Linnea Quigley, dark & kinky
- Blood Feast ('63) Connie Mason, H. G. Lewis dir
- Blood Freak ('72) Insane Christian splatter film!
- Blood of the Vampire ('58/UK) Barbara Shelley
- The Blood Spattered Bride ('72/Ital.) Carmilla tale
- Body Puzzle ('92) Lamberto Bava directs. Unrated
- Brain Dead ('93) Uncut version of "Dead Alive"
- Breeders ('86) Aliens rape naked women
- The Burning ('80) Jason Alexander ("Seinfeld")
- Cafe Flesh ('79/ Uncut X-rated) Sexcapades!
- Caged Heat ('74) Barbara Steele in prison!
- Caligula ('79/UK/Unrated) Malcolm McDowell
- Cannibal Girls ('72) Eugene Levy & Reitman dir
- Cannibal Holocaust ('79/Ital.) Ruggero Dodato dir
- The Car ('77) James Brolin, Kathleen Lloyd
- Chinese Torture Chamber Story ('94/Chn.Eng.subs/X)
- Circus of Horrors('60)) Yvonne Roman,Yvonne Monlaur
- Count Dracula ('78/BBC TV) Louis Jordan as Dracula
- Caligula ('79/UK/Unrated) Malcolm McDowell
- Countess Dracula ('71/UK) Ingrid Pitt, Hammer
- The Cut Throats ('76) Uschi Digard, Nazis!
- Delinquent Schoolgirls ('74) Michael Pataki
- Demon Rage ('80) Britt Ekland, John Carradine
- The Demons ('72) Sex crazed nuns! J. Franco dir
- The Devil Doll ('64/UK) Yvonne Roman,
- Die, Monster, Die ('65/UK/AIP) Boris Karloff
- Don't Go Near the Park ('81) Linnea Quigley
- Double Agent 73 ('74) Chesty Morgan is huge!
- Dracula Exotica ('80/ X) Samantha Fox, V. del Rio
- Dracula Sucks ('79) X version/Uncut Adult
- Eroticize ('83) Nude aerobics w/Kitten Natavidad
- Evils of the Night ('85) J. Newmar, T. Louse, J. Carradine
- Famous T & A ('82) Sybil Danning & nude clips
- Flesh Feast ('70) Veronica Lake's last film
- Forbidden Zone ('80) Susan Tyrrell, H. Villechaize
- Forced Entry ('75) Tanya Roberts, Nancy Allen
- Frogs ('72/AIP) Ray Milland, Sam Elliott
- Fruits of Passion ('81) Story of O continues
- The G.I. Executioner ('71) Angelique Pettyjohn
- Ginger ('70) Chen Caffaro in Bondage Thriller
- Grave of the Vampire ('72) Michael Pataki
- Homicidal ('61) Jean Arless, William Castle directs
- Horror of the Blood Monsters ('70/AI) Adamson dir
- House of Whipcord ('74) Peter Walker directs
- Ilsa, the Wicked Warden ('75) Dyanne Thorne
- Inside Desiree Cousteau ('79/X) costars Serena
- Invasion of the Bee Girls ('73) Victoria Vetri
- I Spit on your Grave ('78) Camille Keaton
- Kronos ('57) Jeff Morrow, Barbara Lawrence
- Lady Stay Dead ('83/Austr.) Gory psycho on the loose!
- The Loves of Irina ('73) Uncut "X" Jess Franco dir
- Make Them Die Slowly ('80/Italian) U. Lenzi dir
- Mark of the Devil ('69) Udo Kier, English dubbed
- Mark of the Devil II ('72) A. Daffring, R. Nalder
- Mr. Sardonicus ('61) William Castle directs
- Ms. 45 ('81) Abel Ferrara directs, Zoe Tamerus
- Ms. Magnificent ('77/ X) Desiree Cousteau
- Myra Breckinridge ('70) Raquel Welch, Mae West
- Naked Super Witches of the Rio Arnote ('77) Franco dir
- Nocturna ('78) Nai Bonet, John Carradine
- Nuns of S'ant Archangelo ('73/Ital./Eng.) O. Muti
- Nurse Sherri ('78) Jill Jacobsen, Al Adamson dir
- Opera ('88) Dario Argento dir., Cristina Marsillach
- The Other Hell ('80/ Italian) Possessed naked nuns!
- Perils of Gwendoline ('84) Tawny Kitaen Bondage
- Pretty Peaches ('78/X) Desiree Cousteau classic
- A Place Called Today ('71) Chen Caffaro/L. Wood
- Rosmix ('91/X /in Chinese/Libs.) Amy Yip
- The Rogue ('76/Ital.) Barbara Bouchet, M. Lee
- Schizo ('76) Lynne Frederick, Stephanie Beacham
- Secret of Blood Island ('65)Barbara Shelly, Hammer!
- Snuff ('76) Alan Schackleton's banned uncut nasty
- S.S. Experiment Love Camp ('78) Nude Nazi torture!
- The Strangler of Bombay ('60/UK) Guy Rolfe
- Street Trash ('88/Unrated) Jim Munro stars & directs
- A Study in Terror ('65/UK) Holmes vs. Jack the Ripper
- Superchick ('73) Joyce Jillson, Uschi Digard
- Sweet Sugar ('72/Uncut) Phyllis Davis behind bars
- Swingers Massacre ('72) Uschi Digard
- Tarts in Torment ('93/X) Bondage w/ Ashley Renee
- Terminal Island ('73) Phyllis Davis, Marta Kristen
- They Came From Within('76) Barbara Steele
- They Saved Hitler's Brain ('63) Audrey Caire
- The Time Travelers ('64) Preston Foster, J. Hoyt
- Thrillaphon ('82/X) A. Pettyjohn, Kitten Natavidad
- Tomb of Torture ('63/Italian) Annie Albert
- Traci, I Love You ('87/X) Traci Lords, M. Jess
- The Trip ('67/AIP) Peter Fonda, Susan Strasberg
- Twins of Evil ('71/UK) The Collinson twins
- The Undead ('56) Allison Hayes, R. Corman dir
- Unhinged ('83/Unrated version) Most Violent!
- The Vampire & The Ballerina ('60) Walter Brandi
- Vampire Circus ('72/UK) Adrienne Corri, Uncut
- Vampyres ('74/Uncut/UK) Aaulka, M. Morris
- Wax Gods of the Deep ('65) V. Price, Susan Hart
- Working Girls ('74) Cassandra (Elvira) Peterson nude
- X: The Unknown ('56/UK) Dean Jagger
- Zombie ('79) Tisa Farrow, Lucio Fulci directs

Send $1 for the Newly Updated 1997 Tapes of Terror VIDEO CATALOG (Sent free with all orders). Foreign Catalog Orders: Send $2.
Orders payable to: P. Riggs, 6226 Dornell, Dept. CM, Houston, TX 77074

Muscles, Myths and Movies™

The first complete, indepth guide to the Cinematic Adventures of

Hercules

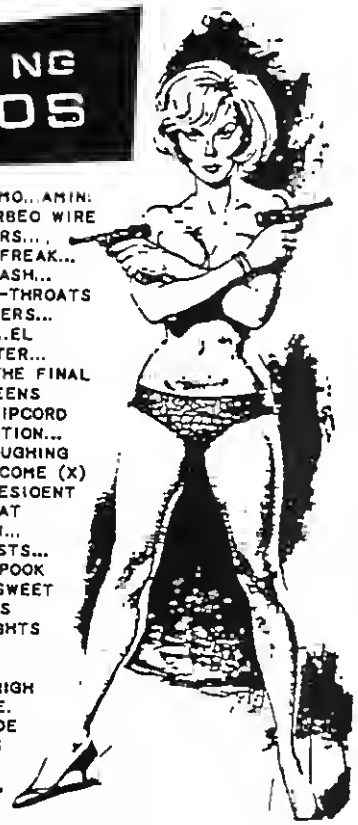
From Steve Reeves, Gordon Scott and Alan Steel to Mickey Hargitay and Arnold Schwarzenegger. From Hercules, Samson, Goliath and the Dragon to Hercules in New York, Atlas and all the Mighty Sons of Hercules. Over 90 titles given with detailed reviews, bios, background info and synopsis for more than 70 of the films listed. 72-page mag-style guide



Send $6.95 plus $1.55 p&h check or money order to:

Stephen Weakley
202 Basswood, dept CM
Elk Grove Village IL 60007

SHOCKING VIDEOS



ABBY...ADDIO ULTIMO UOMO...AMIN: THE RISE AND FALL...BARBED WIRE DOLLS...BEYOND THE DOORS... , BLACK GESTAPO...BLOOD FREAK... BLUE SUNSHINE...BRAINWASH... CENTIPEDE HORROR...CUT-THROATS NINE...OARKTOWN STRUTTERS... THE DIRT GANG...DJANGO...EL TOPO...FEAR IS THE MASTER... FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE...THE FINAL PROGRAMME...GOLDEN QUEENS COMMANDO...HOUSE OF WHIPCORD HOLY MOUNTAIN...INQUISITION... KITTEN WITH A WHIP...LAUGHING DEAD...LET MY PUPPETS COME (X) LINDA LOVELACE FOR PRESIDENT THE LOSERS...MASSACRE AT CENTRAL HIGH...99 WOMEN... PARANOIA...SATAN'S SADISTS... SOUL VENGEANCE...THE SPOOK WHO SAT BY THE DOOR...SWEET SWEETBACK'S BAADASSSSS SONG...A ZED & TWO NOUGHTS AND HUNDREDS MORE!!!

ALL TITLES VHS/SP ON HIGH GRADE, NAME BRAND TAPE. $17.95 EACH PPD. (INCLUDE AGE W/ORDER) NO RIGHTS GIVEN/IMPLIED. CATALOG $3 (FREE W/ORDER) CASH, CHECK, M.O. PAYABLE TO:

MARK JOHNSTON, HC-77 BOX 111 DEPT. CM
HINTON, WV 25951 USA

HORROR EXPLOITATION AND SCHLOCK MOVIE SPECIALISTS

VIDEO WASTELAND

VW offers a COMPLETE LINE of BOOKS, MAGAZINES, POSTERS & PAPER, SOUNDTRACKS, MEXICAN WRESTLING STUFF, T-SHIRTS, AUTOGRAPHS and MUCH MORE

We also offer over 2,500 RARE, OUT OF PRINT and HARD TO FIND Horror, Exploitation and Schlock films; available to inexpensively RENT BY MAIL to anywhere in the U.S.A.

OUR ALL NEW, REVISED AND UPDATED RENTAL REVIEW AND REFERENCE GUIDE TO OVER 2,500 FILMS WILL BE AVAILABLE SOON. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL ABOUT AVAILABILITY AND PRICE.

OUR ILLUSTRATED MERCHANDISE CATALOG ONLY IS AVAILABLE FOR $3.00 [$5.00 Foreign] RENTAL INFORMATION ONLY IS FREE.

VIDEO WASTELAND
214 FAIR STREET
BEREA, OH. 44017

Phone (216) 891-1920 from 1pm to 9pm EST, Monday thru Friday
MAIL ORDER ONLY. NO STORE.
VISIT OUR WEB SIGHT AT
http://slaughter.net/wasteland

The Sword & Sandal Video Collection

Now available on home video! The great Italian muscleman epics and historical hell-raisers from the 1960's are yours in this thrilling collectors' series!!

ALI BABA AND THE SACRED CROWN
(1962, b&w Rod Flesh Iloosh Bella Cortez)
The Wizard of Sesame sends for that big slab of beef Ali Baba so that he can carry the Sacred Crown of the Desert Kings to a nearby land that s come under the evil influence of Mustafa Bey Well paced action romance and torture!#6045

ALI BABA AND THE SEVEN SARACENS
(1963, color Gordon Mitchell)
Rebel leader Ali Baba returns to the city of Coprah for a final confrontation with their King the totally unhinged Omar (Gordon Mitchell) His love affair with Omar's niece Fatima get's them both in hot water #6046

ATTACK OF THE NORMANS
(1964, b&w, Cameron Mitchell Genevieve Gred)
Marauding Norman priests ambush the returning King, stealing his gold and killing his guards Plenty of swordplay and elaborate on-location battles #6151

AVENGER OF THE SEVEN SEAS
(1963, color Richard Harrison, Michelle Mercier)
Richard Harrison Keeps standing up for the oppressed just to find himself on the business end of the torture chamber Women-eating sharks, man-eating plants, and some very satisfying beefcake in peril scenes #6047

CAVALIER OF THE DEVIL'S CASTLE
(1965, color, Massimo Serato Irene Tunc, Franco Fantasia)
The Masked Cavalier rides out of nowhere to rescue the villagers under Captain Ugonia's obsessive thumb Dungeons, kidnapping, swordplay galore #6150

THE CENTURIAN
(1962, b&w Jacques Sernas, Genevieve Grad, Glenna Maria Canale Gordon Mitchell, John Drew Barrymore) After years of unrest, things heat up between Rome and city states that make up the Agelans A sword and sandal soaper, but luckily there's Barrymore playing yet another psycho heavy to keep things boiling #6147

COLOSSUS AND THE HEADHUNTERS
(1960, color Kirk Morris, Laura Brown)
Non-stop action as Maciste shows up just in time to save the last survivors of an island tribe as their island blows up Exotic women in peris, beefcake in combat, and the hammiest death scene by a sword n sandal villain ever!#5537

COLOSSUS OF THE ARENA
(1960, color Mark Forest, Scilla Gabel)
Seven of the most fearsome gladiators are brought together to fight in the arena during the coronation of the good queen Fatima As the plot thickens Maciste comes to the rescue and battles an unruly mob An old man and a chimp provide comic relief.#5397

COLOSUS AND THE AMAZON QUEEN
(1964, COLOR Rod Taylor Ed Fury, Gianna Maria Canale, Dorian Grey) Two musclemen find themselves stranded in the Queendom of the Amazons where sex roles are reversed Lots of statuesque women with sensational legs in skimpy miniskirts, and a good sweaty beefcake test-of-strength show stopper #5401

CONQUEROR OF THE ORIENT
(1962, color, Rik Battaglia, Irene Tunc, Paul Muller)
Princess Fatima becomes the object of obsession by local evil ruler Dakar Lots of turbans harem girls and wild sword fights Good action and acting by all #6048

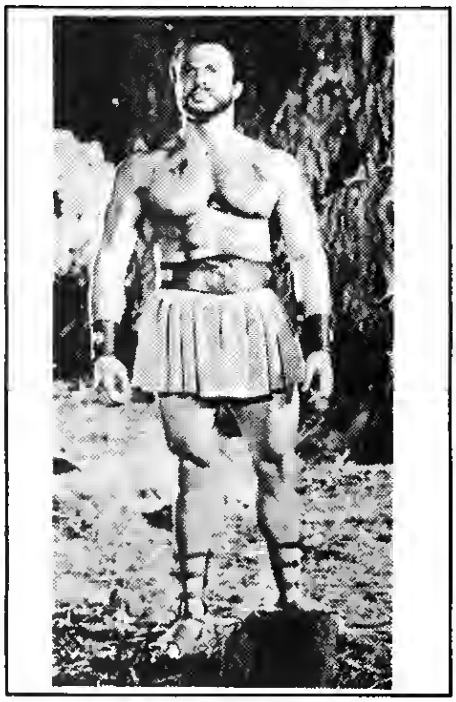
CONQUEROR OF ATLANTIS
(1965, color, Kirk Morris, Luciana Gilli, Helen Channel)
Curious noises in the Arabian desert signal an attack bizarre phantom-like raiders of gold There's re-animated dead guys, female guards who are killed if they taste the love of a man, and Morris in a great turn as Hercules Lots of babes, beefcake, and bizarro bits of kink #5536

DAVID AND GOLIATH
(1961, color, Orson Welles, Ivo Dayer, Edward Hilton)
Classic tale of the young shepherd who's chosen by God to become ruler of Israel is given the sword n sandal treatment This "freely adapted" version of the biblical story is closer to a Saturday Matinee than a Sunday School Lecture. Welles is great!#6049

DESERT WARRIOR
(1961, b&w, Ricardo Montalban, Anna Maria Ferrero)
After butchering most of the local countryside, the new man in charge allows a ruthless mercenary to become his right hand man, and first in line for his daughter Loads of action with the pyramids and the Sphinx as a real backdrop, no cardboard sets or rear projection here! A nice burning-hot-poker torture scene rounds out the show #6050

FIRE MONSTERS VS THE SON OF HERCULES
(1962, color, Reg Park)
The phenomenal Reg Park stars as Hercules (Maciste) in this S&S fantasy which pits him against an invincible Hydra Monster, surly cavemen, and a frightful sea monster #4901

FURY OF HERCULES
(1962,color, Brad Harris, Brigitte Corey, Mara Berni)
A young Queen's power is being corrupted by an evil adviser until Hercules enters the arena Brad Harris turns in a great job as Hercules, doing acting and fight scenes with confidece. Alan Steel does an early appearance as a mute mercenary There's love



scenes, tests of strength, and the mangiest gorilla suit monster you've ever seen #6051

GIANTS OF ROME
(1962, color, Richard Harrison, Wandisa Guida)
Four of Ceaser's greatest mercenaries are sent off on a great suicide mission lead by Claudius (Harrison) One kick-ass action filled fight after another, filmed almost entirely outdoors on-location #6052

GIANTS OF THESSALY
(1960, color, Roland Carey, Ziva Rodann)
Another S&S extravaganza based on the legend of "Jason and the Golden Fleece " This includes flesh-eating monsters and evil witches #5432

THE GIANT OF MARATHON
(1959, color Steve Reeves, Daniella Rocca)
After the popularity of two Hercules features, Reeves returns as Philippides, defending Athens against Persian invaders Cinematography by Mario Bava #4902

GOLIATH AND THE DRAGON
(1960, COLOR, Mark Forest, Elenora Ruffo)
Broderick Crawford appears an an evil toga-wearing king who likes to lower female victims into a pit of horror Goliath battles him and such creatures as a three-headed dog, a dragon, giant bat and the wind goddess Les Baxter did the American version's musical score #4904

GIANT OF METROPOLIS
(1963, COLOR, Gordon Michelle, Roldano Lupi)
In the year 10,000, Obro and a band of men attempt to reech Metropolis, a city where science is supreme. There a mad scientist, attmpting to make his son immortal, subjects him to torture and experimentation. #4903

GOLIATH AT THE CONQUEST OF DAMASCUS
(1962 COLOR, Rock Stevens)
Goliath comes to the aid of the Sultan Saleem who's country of Damascus has been overtaken Rock Steven (aka Peter Lupus) is an excellent Goliath Great story and excellent color print #5519

GOLIATH AND THE SINS OF BABYLON
(1963 color, Mark Gorest, Guliano Gemma)
Maciste is called Goliath in this epic During his travels, Goliath goes to a small kingdon where he wins a chanot reace, rescues 21 virgins from a Babylonian sacrafice, and keeps one for himself #5510

GLADIATORS OF ROME
(1962, color, Gordon Scott. Wandisa Guida, Elen Varga)
Slave Marcus (Scott) keeps a close eye on young slave Neeza, since she may actually be of royal blood Action, torture, romance, and those pesky Christian-haters as the villains #6053

HERCULES
(1957, color, Steve Reeves, Sylvia Koscina)
The Italian classic that started it all! Story is based on "Jason and the Golden Fleece" and features loads of S&S action and beautiful Italian babes Mario Bava was the cinematographer #5424

HERCULES UNCHAINED
(1959,COLOR, Reeves, Koscina)
In a sequel to Hercules, the son of Jupiter loses his memory thanks to evil queen Lidia, who kills and stuffs all her lovers! #5485

HERCULES PRISONER OF EVIL
(1964, color, Reg Park, Ettore Manni)
Park stars as Maciste/Hercules in his third film in the genre This time a witch turns men into warewolves and Herculea must defeat her, but not before being captured and caged himself! #4909

HERCULES AND THE TYRANTS OF BABYLON
(1963, color, Rock Stevens)
Directed by Domenico Paolella and one of the hardest to find, this one is peculiar but a joy to watch Mission Impossible fans will love seeing him as "Rock Stevens", pumped up and mighty as he destroys Babylon. #6087

HERCULES AND THE PRINCESS OF TROY
(1965, color, Gordon Scott, Diana Hyland)
While making their way home to Thebes, Hercules and his crew take time out to help those in need. This is the unsold pilot to the proposed Hercules TV series. Directed by Albert Band and backed by Joseph Levine, this never was picked up by a network Includes Gordon Mitchell and the coolest monster ever in a Hercules film #6054

HERCULES AGAINST THE MOON MEN
(1964, color, Alan Steel)
French/Italian co-production has Hercules fight Moon Men living in the Mountain of Death A rich fantasy of mystical outerspace beings, a vampire queen revived by weird blood sacrifices, super rock-men robots and beefcake chained and tortured by forces of evil #4905

HERCULES AGAINST THE MONGOLS
(1963, color, Mark Forest, Jose Greci, Ken Clark)
The three sons of Genghis Khan go on a rampage after their father's death. A high priced adventure with great fights, elaborate end battle, Hercules enslaved and forced to do one outstanding feat of strength after another Mark Forest flexes that incredible physique and shows it off at it's best! #6059

HERCULES AND THE MASKED RIDER
(1964, COLOR, Alan Steel, Mimmo Palmara)
Kind of a Zorro meets Hercules, but not exactly It's a cool movie, was hard to find until now, and this is from a great print Mimmo Palmyra carries most of the action. Steel's build has never looked this defined and he's never been this graceful. Great story, sensational musical score, and bare-chested fight scenes throughout #6058

HERCULES AND THE BLACKPIRATE
(1964,color, Alan Steel)
Captain Hercules (Steel) overcomes the Black Pirate when the villain ambushes the Governor's hunting party. It's the high seas on a low budget in one of the rarest outings in the genre #6148

HERCULES AGAINST THE BARBARIANS
(1964, COLOR, Mark Forest, Gloria Milland)
Hercules helpt the Polish people save Krecow from the mongol hoards. It's got Forest at his prime, and two of the phoniest rubber reptiles in film history. #6057

INVINCIBLE GLADIATOR
(1961, color, Richard Harrison, Jole Mauro)
The ultimate gladiator movie From the leather and metal gear in the beginning to his torn and tattered rags at the end, Harrison is spectacular! Fine widescreen print. #6061

JOURNEY BENEATH THE DESERT
(1961, color, Haya Harareet, Jean Louis Trtignant)
The popular Atlantis legend, this time set under the desert. Three mining engineer surveying the Sahara crash in a nuclear test zone, amidst shieks and an evil queen who turns one of the guys into a golden statue. #4777

KILMA, QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE
(1965, color, Eva Miller Frank Brana, Luis Ciges)
Pirates, cat fights, Amazon Women and a battle of the sexes. Eva Miller has curves & plenty eye makeup. #6062

LAST DAYS OF POMPEII
(1960, color, Steve Reeves, Cristine Kauffman)
Decadence, torture, secret societies, political intrigue and mass murder Plot heavy, but Reeves & the producers make this a class package. #6063

LION OF THEBES
(1964, color, Mark Forest Yvonee, Furneaux)
Helen of Troy is on her way home to Sparta when her ship crashes off the shores of Africa Plots thicken and Mark Forest must be her eternal watchdog. #6065

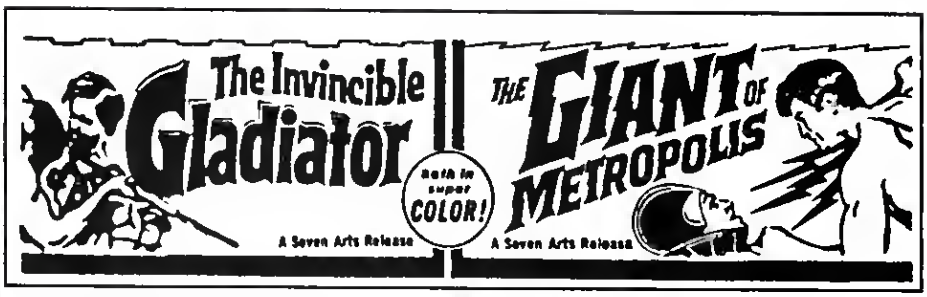
THE LION OF ST. MARK
(1967, color, Gordon Scott, Gianna Maria Canale)
Extensive use of Venice's canals and palaces add flair to this plot-heavy swashbuckler. #6064

MACISTE AGAINST HERCULES IN THE VALE OF WOE
(1964, color, Kirk Morris, Liana Orgei, Frank Gordon) Conmen hop on a time maching and go back 7000 years to the land of Hercules A weird comedy with prime beefcake #6005

MEDUSA VS THE SON OF HERCULES
(1962, color Richard Harrison, Anna Ranalti)
Perseus battles Medusa the Gorgon of Greek myth who can turn men to stone. #4911

MESSALINA VS THE SON OF HERCULES
(1962, color, Richard Harrison)
It's the invinsible Son of Hercules against the evil Messalina. Can his strength defeat her evil? #5269

THE MAGIC SERPENT
(1966 color, Hiroki Matsukata)
Set in ancient Japan this fantastic tale features a prince who seeks revenge against the sorcerer who killed his father Lots of cheesy effects, the prince transforms into a giant frog to defeat his nemesis who changes into a dragon #4788
THE MAGIC SWORD
(1962, color Basil Rathbone Vampira, Gary Lockwood)
Sorcery epic has evil magician kidnap a princess and devise seven challenges for her would-be rescuer Giant ogres, two-haaded dragons siamese twins #4910
MASK OF THE MUSKETERS
(1964, B&W, Gordon Scott, Jose Greci)
Zorro's trying to save young Isabella from the French in their war with Spain Clever adventure and swordplay #6066
REBEL GLADIATOR
(1962, B&W, Dan Vadis Alan Steel, Gloria Milland)
Thanks to Vadis & Steel this film has the best man-to-man fight scene in the genre Action keeps the testosterone level up to full volume #6068
REVOLT OF THE BARBARIANS
(1964, color Roland Carey Grazia Maria Spina)
A Roman consul is sent to investigate the theft of some gold shipments Muscleman action galore! #5434
ROMULUS AND THE SABINES
(1964, color Roger Moore, Folco Lulli)
Light hearted classic filled with vestal virgins and espionage galore #6070
SWORD OF THE REBELLION
(1964 B&W Gerard Landry Annie Alberti)
Swashbuckler in the fashion of Robin Hood #6075
SWORD OF DAMASCUS
(1963, color, Tony Russel, Luciana Gilli)
A nice try at Sword n Sandal comedy that comes together for an exciting climax #6074
SAMSON AGAINST THE SHIEK
(1962, B&W, Ed Fury)
Samson shows up during the Middle Ages to do his he-man, musclebound routine #5520
SAMSON AND THE SEA BEAST
(1960, B&W Kirk Morris Margaret Lee)
Fight scenes with loving close ups of Morris's muscles, along with pirates, cannons and a blow-up reptile #6071
SAMSON AND HIS MIGHTY CHALLENGE
(1964, color, Alan Steel)
This one brings together all the legends of Hercules, Samson, Maciste and Ursus, ending in an explosive climax #5398
SAMSON
(1961, color, Brad Harris Alan Steel Bridget Corey)
In his tight toga, drenched in olive oil, muscleman Samson uses his strength to de-throne an evil queen and place the rightful ruler in her place #5271
SON OF SAMSON
(1960 color Mark Forest, Chelo Alonso)
Maciste fights an evil queen and leads the slaves into revolt



SON OF HERCULES IN THE LAND OF DARKNESS
(1962, B&W, Dan Vadis)
Muscle guys battle witches and dragons #4913
SON OF HERCULES VS THE MOLEMEN
(1961, color, Mark Forest, Moira Orfei, Paul Wynter)
Maciste battles albino molemen from an underground kingdom #5279
SLAVE GIRLS OF SHEBA
(1963, B&W, Jose Suarez, Linda Cristel Mimmo Palmara)
Slave girls go straight, a good girl goes bad then goes out with a bang Sergio Liona co-wrote #6072
SON OF CLEOPATRA
(1962, color Mark Damon, Scilla Gabel, Albert Lupo)
Spectacular desert locations, evil plots #6073
TAUR THE MIGHTY
(1964, color, Joe Robinson, Belle Cortez)
Taur and his companion find a city destroyed by an evil queen Taus is captured pulled by a team of horses, and put through a rock-crusher. #5431
THE TARTAR INVASION
(1962, B&W, Yoko Tani, Ettore Manni, Akim Tamiroff)
Tartar raids Poland in the 17th century #6076
THE TERROR OF THE STEPPES
(1962, color, Kirk Morris, Moira Oferi, Ugo Sasso)
Sandokahn ransoms beautiful princess in this power and love triangle Morris with blonde hair dye! #6080
TERROR OF ROME AGAINS SON OF HERCULES
(1963, color, Mark Forest, Mantu Toto, Peter White)
Poseidon and Caesar feature in a gladiator spectacular Directed by veteran Mario Caiano #6078
TERROR OF THE RED MASK
(1964, color, Lex Barker, Chelo Alonso, Ugo Sasso)
Alonso is magnificent! Her dance number that's edited together with Barker's torture scene is a hittel #6079
THARUS SON OF ATTILA
(1962, color, Jerome Courtland Mimmo Palmara)
It's swords, sandals, baggy shorts, capture and torture, plus a great bad-guy to hate! #6077

THE VIOLENT PATRIOT
(1962, B&W Bittorio Gassman, Anna Mano)
Costume drama, battles & romance #6082
THE WHITE WARRIOR
(1961, color, Steve Reeves, Georgia Moll)
Great adaptation of Tolstoy, Reeves in Russia #6083
THE WITCH'S CURSE
(1962 color, Kirk Morris Helene Chanel, Vira Silenti)
Maciste descends into Hell to find a witch #4917
GIANTS OF THESSALY
(1960, color, Roland Carey, Ziva Rodann)
Monsters & witches in another telling of "Jason & The Golden Fleece" #5432
SON OF SAMSON
(1960, color, Mark Forest, Chelo Alonso, Vira Silenti)
Forest as Maciste, fights queen & trees slaves) #4914
SAMSON AND THE 7 MIRACLES OF THE WORLD
(1961, color, Gordon Scott, Yoko Tani, Helene Chanel)
Samson goes to china, saves princess, fights Tartar rebles and get buried alive! Heavy action! #5272
THE MONGOLS
(1960, color, Jack Palance, Enita Eckberg)
Son of Ghengis Khan sets sights on a beautiful prize in this elaborate Sword & Sandal epic #5514
HERCULES AND THE CAPTIVE WOMEN
(1961, color Reg Park, Fay Spain)
Hercules goes to Atlantis, ruled by sadistic Queen Antinea who has powers to control men! #4906
HERCULES OF THE DESERT
(1964, color, Kirk Morris, Helene Chanel)
Hercules comes to the aid of nomads who are being suppressed by evil princess Hott #5419
HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD
(1961, color, Reg Park Christopher Lee)
Hercules goes to Hades to find rare plant Rock men lava seas, a naked maiden in chains, more! #4908
GLADIATORS 7 (1962, color, Richard Harrison, Livio Lorenzon)
Gladiators have vowed to free Sparta from tyrant ruler Musclemen, action, and some humor too! #5521

QTY	CATALOG NO.	TITLE	PRICE

Cult Movies Magazine
6201 Sunset Blvd., Suite 152
Hollywood CA 90028

Mastercard and Visa Accepted!!!

SUBTOTAL	
SHIPPING & HANDLING	
8.25% SALES TAX CALIFORNIA ONLY	
TOTAL	

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Age _____

MC or VISA No _____ Exp _____

Signature _____

I hereby state that I am 18 years of age or older and am requesting adult oriented material

ALL VIDEOS ARE $20.00 EACH!

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

Please make your check out to Cult Movies.

Shipping: Please add $3.00 (postage and handling) for the first video; $1.50 each additional video. Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. Personal checks must clear before shipping. All videos are NTSC. All videos recorded on new, quality, brand name videotape at SP mode.

TAXES: California residents must add 8.25% sales tax.



Harry Langdon's Haunted House

Can you be sure it isn't true?????

Harry Langdon starred in several comedies that had ghostly titles and themes as subject matter. *Goodness! A Ghost* is one of his Columbia sound pictures that summons up visions of movie hauntings and Harry's panicked reactions. But the spookiest activites of all relate to the big house Langdon lived in during the very height of his film stardom. Parapsychologists and investigators have for years called it the most undeniably haunted house in Hollywood.

The house is an incredible Spanish castle in the Hollywood Hills. Built in 1925, possibly by Langdon, it looms forbidingly over Holly Mont Drive and towers over most of the surrounding homes on the Argyle Hill. Langdon lived in the house until his fall from grace at First National in 1929.

In true Hollywood fashion, this appears to be a double-feature haunting, since the house to the west of it has for years been manifesting a number of startling events. The second site is a smaller Spanish colonial house, with a romantic past — Barbara Stanwick and Robert Taylor had once lived there.

Raise your eyebrows if you wish, but these houses are joined by an underground tunnel. In the 1970s the owner of the Langdon house discovered a secret passageway behind a built-in bookshelf during remodeling. It connected to a series of subterranean tunnels linking several houses on the hillside. The underground tunnel connects to a 1920s era apartment over two blocks downhill, and possibly to a nearby monastary. The owner of the Langdon house, while exploring the tunnel beneath his house, found a makeshift grave, with a headstone reading "Regina 1922." The date suggests the gravesite was there before the houses were built. It's believed the tunnels were used to store and transport bootleg liquor during prohibition.

And what of the hauntings? The events form a textbook listing of paranormal activities. Doorbells which ring, though no longer connected to any electric current. Spontaneous combustion of innert materials. Objects which fly through the air, ghostly footsteps, and fragrances that manifest suddenly, with no apparent cause.

In May 1976, Dr. Barry Taff, then research associate in UCLA's Neuropsychiatric Institute, spent weeks investigating the two homes. He stated that at one point, "Coins pelted us. They appeared to be falling from thin air." While a TV news crew tried to shoot footage, the power to the electrical outlets would go dead. Other outlets would remain unaffected.

These alarming events were shared between the two houses; not all of them occured in Harry's old house. And we wouldn't begin to suggest that Harry is the one haunting the hillside. But merely think of these things going on in Harry's house and it immediately takes on a less threatening feel than if it was a place where Lugosi might have lived. Of the several books outlining these haunting activities, the most detailed and authenticated is *Hollywood Haunted* by Laurie Jacobson and Marc Wanamaker. A rundown of shoes, books, food that fly though the air is given. A sack of cloth napkins flew through the air and landed before TV reporter Connie Fox. Ghosts? Poltergeists? Dr. Taff was convinced there was an intelligence at work, that these were not random bursts of activity.

But try to imagine these real events taking place on film. Would this necessarily be a shocker like *The Exorcist*? As I read through the account, I believe what I'm reading, but I can also see these events as slapstick Three Stooges bits, or comedy scenes with Harry Langdon himself. The Taff Report details a giant world atlas, it's pages open and flapping like a bird, chasing the horrified Connie Fox, and a cabbage with a knife in it chasing a houseboy (who understandably resigned immediately). Antics such as those were routine at the Columbia lot where Langdon shot 22 short comedies.

Funny, shocking and maybe sad, something was going on. And enough unwanted activity and public attention was stirred up that no outside investigators have been allowed back to the houses since the mid-1970s.

What we're left with is a collection of bits and pieces of evidence which no one has ever tried to tie together. There's that brief paragraph in a 1929 issue of *Photoplay* magazine: "Then there is Harry Langdon's towering Spanish castle on the Argyle hilltop, in which he spent so many unhappy days, beset with domestic trouble and the worries of a career which had promised so much and yet did not last. He signed over the house to his wife and went back to vaudeville. Now he is back in Hollywood, beginning again, but he is not living in the Spanish home." It's accompanied by a picture of the house, then only four years old.

Langdon's return to vaudeville was via the prestigious Palace in New York in a sketch he'd written. He played for a full month to generally favorable reviewes. The March 20, 1929 *Variety* described what went on: "Following the full stage action, which was laughless but for Harry's facial business, Langdon appeared before the drape for five minutes of intimate talk and topped off with a comedy dance. That dance lasting about a minute brought more response than all of the preceeding seventeen minutes." The engagement earned him good press and a return to films. In May of 1929 Harry signed a contract to make sound comedies for Hal Roach studios.

Then there are other matters which could mean much, or could be unrelated. The evidence is only one paragraph, this time in the Feb. 16, 1933 issue

of the *Los Angeles Times*. Laurie reprints it in her *Hollywood Haunted* book. Under a headline nearly as long as the entire piece, the news item states: "After a protracted drinking spree, Charles Love, 32-year-old motion picture property man and 'double,' yesterday wrote a note of farewell to Harry Langdon, film comedian, and shot himself through the head in his room at a Hollywood hotel."

Why a man resorting to suicide should write a farewell note to Harry Langdon the notice does not speculate. To his wife, kids, or parents maybe? Or perhaps his minister? It doesn't indicate this happened. He wrote goodbye to Harry.

In her book Laurie Jacobson theorizes that Charles Love was murdered, and that his ghost has been haunting the Oban Hotel (site of the killing) these many years. Incidentally, the Oban is just down the hill, due south of the big castle on Holly Mont Drive, site of the double house hauntings.

Perhaps the area is charged with psychic energy and emotions powerful enough to throw bags of napkins at TV reporters and re-route electric current. The ghosts may feed on the high charged emotional output of an area spilling over with on-the-edge rock musicians, drug dealers/users, runaway kids, and hookers who've populated the neighborhood since the 1970s. Maybe the ghostly entities travel through that network of tunnels beneath Hollywood that once conveyed bootleg hootch.

A few sidelights. Are the houses still active with ghostly activity? Dr. Taff doesn't know, since even he's been denied entrance to the property. We mentioned this to Mabel Langdon, wife of Harry, who exclaimed, "Let's check it out — I'd like to meet the ghost!" Our photographer, Coco Kiyonaga came along on the journey, bringing Mrs. Langdon up to the house. We made contact of sorts with someone on an intercom, but were also refused any admittance to the Spanish castle. (Since Mable didn't meet and marry the comedian until 1933, she had no prior knowledge of the location.)



A final note. We are still uncertain who had the big Spanish castle on the hill constructed, and whether Langdon was first to occupy the estate. Could he have had it built as a speakeasy during Prohibition times? Did he know of the network of underground tunnels connecting this building to others? Could his emtionally charged tenure at the place in any way launch the paranormal activities continuing through the decades? We can't say.

What we can attest to is this. Early this year we conducted a title search via the Los Angeles Hall of Records to determine who the original owner of Holly Mount Castle might have been. Several times during this search, the clerk at city hall experienced a computer shut down, as if to withhold this historical fact. Ghosts in the city computer system? A supervisor had the same experience when trying to bring up this information, and only this information. "We've never had anything like this happen before," was their sole explanation.

For the time being, we've decided not to pursue any further line of investigation. This may be one of the many "things we are not meant to know."■





Taking No Prisoners

Lawrence of Arabia *at the Dawn of the '60s*

by Katherine Orrison

In early 1960, a five-times-a-week half-hour pro-Hollywood forerunner of *Entertainment Tonight* called *Here's Hollywood* was picked up for daily broadcast by one of the two Northern Alabama television stations that reached my hometown of Anniston

Being in the forefront of the Baby-Boom generation—those born in the post-war '40s—meant I was still in elementary school when *Here's Hollywood* hit the airwaves, luckily at 3:00 p.m., school being out for Boomers at 2:30. It was just enough time to walk home from class, grab a Popsicle and warm up the TV set, the old vacuum-tube sets taking as many as two to three minutes to provide a picture

Each *Here's Hollywood* episode covered two "subjects," with 15 minutes granted to each. Fifteen minutes with Dorothy Provine on the set of *The Roaring Twenties* on the Warner Bros. back lot and fifteen minutes with her co-star, Donald May, on a picnic in Griffith Park with his wife and two children. As an extra added bonus, there was an opening drive to the location in a convertible car, usually with Jack Linkletter waving and talking at the wheel. This drive-around at the start of each show was done so accurately that I wound up knowing the streets of Hollywood, Holmby Hills, and Bel Air better than I knew my own neighborhood, with the result of never getting lost when I finally began to drive those streets for myself in 1969.

If someone really *big* was interviewed—say, John Wayne—an entire half-hour show was granted the star. And up until mid-1961 this norm was never deviated from... until *Lawrence of Arabia*. Somehow, some way, *Here's Hollywood* took the extraordinary step of flying to Spain and allocating an entire week of shows to the shooting of *Lawrence of Arabia* in Spain and Morocco. Director David Lean, looking tan and fit after nine months in the desert (well, he *would*: he was the only man with his girlfriend—*Lawrence*'s script supervisor—with him the whole time), granted a 15-minute interview on Day One, along with 15 minutes given to producer Sam Spiegel. Day Two saw Alec Guinness holding forth on "working again with David," the second fifteen minutes going to José Ferrer. I have always suspected that Andy Warhol was a secret fan of this show, due to his "everyone is allotted fifteen minutes of fame" statement, made when he got famous. Finally, for Friday, it was announced that the unknown star of *Lawrence of Arabia* would be interviewed, but the audience was warned not to expect anything. "Peter O'Toole has been known to remain reticent when interviewed, and he may not be talkative today."

Then followed the most remarkable *Here's Hollywood* segment I ever saw: a first-time glimpse of a 27-year-old Peter O'Toole—still in uniform and "in character" as Lawrence, saying almost nothing more than "Bloody hot" for 15 minutes.

No doubt about it—he was compelling, his extraordinary looks eclipsed only by his uncooperative manner. Thereafter, until *Lawrence of Arabia*'s premiere in London in December 1962, Peter O'Toole was kept under wraps, the coup of *Here's Hollywood's* preemptive scoop by then but a distant memory.

As a result, the white-hot intensity of O'Toole's performance on screen and *Lawrence of Arabia* entirely took the movie-going world by storm, for not only was Mr. O'Toole's British new wave acting style a revelation, but David Lean had succeeded at completely redefining the second most tired genre in all of movies: the "desert picture."

Second only to Westerns as a genre in the longest-running rut, Hollywood's desert pictures had proved to be a dependable "exotic-romantic" matinee staple since D.W. Griffith had substituted California's Mojave Desert and parts of Chatsworth



"Stand and fight!" — Alec Guinness

for the Babylonian (now Iraqi) desert in *Intolerance*.

Sand, camels, and men with flowing robes and long skirts on delicate Arabian horses proved irresistible to other movie notables in the late teens, like C.B. DeMille (*Male and Female*) and Theda Bara (*Cleopatra*). But it was Rudolph Valentino's Chic Sheik in 1920s *The Sheik* that wrote the book for the next 40 years. Followed by later '20s fare such as *Beau Geste*, *Son of the Sheik*, and *Beau Sabeaur*, then in the '30s by *The Lost Patrol*, *Morocco*, *Under Two Flags*, *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer* (the Indian desert, but desert nevertheless), *Dark Sands*, *The Garden of Allah* and another (and, for my money, the best) version of *Beau Geste*, the desert genre always had several givens: the Foreign Legion was romantic as hell, the British were always holding out in the last outpost of civilization, the Arabs were wily buggers, and "there is a foreign legion of women, too, only they do not get medals when they are brave" (to quote Marlene Dietrich as Amy in *Morocco*).

Depending on your point of view, T.E. Lawrence had the good or bad fortune to die suddenly and (to some) mysteriously in a motorcycle accident in England in 1935. Nineteen thirty-five happened to be the year *Bengal Lancers* came out, and the year David O Selznick went to work on the first TechniColor desert picture, *The Garden of Allah* (with Dietrich again). As soon as Lawrence's death notice flashed around the world—I always picture the RKO Radio tower at moments like these—plans were formed in Hollywood to film *Lawrence of Arabia*. Yes, that's right: in 1938. After much casting about, Leslie Howard was signed to star; given what the real Lawrence looked and acted like, not a bad choice. Howard Hawks (a man's-man director) was announced to direct, and location shooting was mapped out for White Sands, New Mexico with background shots of the real Sahara assigned to a second unit.

I've always been intrigued by this possibility of a *Lawrence* bio. How, or *would*, it have dealt with Lawrence's sadomasochistic form of homosexuality (alluded to in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*)? Who would play Prince Feisal, and how would he and his people have been presented? (I speculate actor Ian Keith for Feisal and a "noble warrior" interpretation.) That Lawrence would be an out-and-out hero on a white Arabian horse I have no doubt. Battle scenes shot in New Mexico, with close-ups of Howard against a process screen in the studio are more than likely with a womanly romantic interest being provided as a possibility as well.

And, for all of it undoubtedly, it would have been a good movie—probably, given the talent involved, a very successful movie—and we never would have known what we would be missing.

As it was, World War II interfered with the best-laid plans of movie studios and men with North Africa suddenly off-limits to second units and star actor Leslie Howard's plane being shot down by the Nazis. *Lawrence of Arabia* was dropped by all concerned, but desert pictures continued to flourish with only a slight change of approach: namely that the Nazi General replaced the Arab Prince as the formidable foe. *Five Graves to Cairo*, *Saharo*, and *The Desert Fox* proved the genre still valid before the 1950s picked up exactly where Rudolph Valentino had left off, and movies like *The Desert Song* and *Haji Baba*, and television's *Captain Gallant of the Foreign Legion* returned to the tried-and-true formula.



"The trick is not minding that it hurts."

After 1958's *The Bridge On the River Kwai* won everything worth having at the Academy Awards, David Lean could get just about any movie he wanted made, and he chose *Gandhi*. Remember, I said just *about* any movie. After a futile year he put *Gandhi* on the back burner (where it would languish an equal number of years before being made by Richard Attenborough in the early '80s) and chose *Lawrence* as his next collaboration with Alec Guinness (Guinness as Gandhi? You can bet on it) and producer Sam Spiegel.

Although Guinness had played T.E. Lawrence quite successfully in London's West End (the play was called *Ross*—a name Lawrence sometimes went under to avoid recognition), he was now too old to cast in the lead. Instead, Albert Finney—at that time being hailed as the "new" Olivier—got the part, and all of one weeks' filming went into the can before Lean canned Finney.

Again, the possibilities are tantalizing. How was Finney approaching *Lawrence*? That T.E. Lawrence's (extremely) short stature (he claimed to be 5'-5" but was probably more like 5'-3") and all his neuroses resulting therefrom were to be addressed is a certainty (no chance of it with 6'-2" O'Toole). But Finney's very strong brand of personal masculinity would work against him on screen, and trying to visualize him speaking like Lawrence when addressing his commanding officers ("I'm not being insubordinate, it's just my manner, Sir") is a near impossibility.

The then 26-year-old Peter O'Toole (fresh from making a name in the West End with *The Long, the Short, and the Tall*) was an emergency replacement after a final strong argument between Lean and Finney on interpretation of the role. (Finney kept asking for written changes; Lean kept refusing). That Lean found someone he liked so well on such short notice was a Godsend. That the man in question was willing to get a (second) nose job to look more like the English Lawrence than the Irishman he was must have struck some as a miracle. But actually, had O'Toole not had the first nose job he wouldn't have been in the running at all, his original nose dooming him to character roles only, until a smaller configuration threw the emphasis on his aggressively blue eyes and lopped ten years off his appearance.

As it was, David Lean wasn't out of the woods yet, as O'Toole's health was so delicate and his body so unathletic that betting pools sprang up within the crew not as to *if* he would die during filming, but *when*. In the decades since, Peter O'Toole surprised everyone by surviving not only the rigorous two years of filming, but many of the before-mentioned crew members. I realize now that when O'Toole was interviewed in 1961 by some annoying American TV show he'd never heard of, he was probably sick, incredibly tired, and wishing he could have a drink to ease his stomach pain. He was also deeply "in character" and obviously shooting the "I don't want to be part of the 'Big Push'!" scene. That he spoke at all is remarkable, even if it was only, "It was bloody hot out there on the desert, you know? Bloody hot."

Film distribution being what it was in 1962 and 1963, it was February *1964* before *Lawrence of Arabia* got to Alabama. I had come very close to seeing it in March of '63 during my one and only trip to New York, but I was voted down by the entire rest of my high school freshman class in favor of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It wasn't an isolated incident: at that spring's Academy Awards, *Lawrence* won almost every award—Best Picture, Director (David Lean), Writer (Robert Bolt), Music (Maurice Jarré), Cinematography (Freddie Young), Editing (Anne V. Coates), and even Best Sound), but not a single acting award. Best Actor went to Gregory Peck's rural Alabama lawyer in *Mockingbird*. (With some six Best Actor nominations since, O'Toole has yet to win.)

Cullman, Alabama (where I was residing in '64) was a college town in those days, with all us eager young pseudo-sophisticated acting students lin-

(continued)



"I don't know who I am"

ing up in the rain on Saturday afternoon to see *Lawrence of Arabia* at last. "Winner of Seven Academy Awards," the poster proclaimed. "Introducing Peter O'Toole as Lawrence." (Well, he had made appearances in a couple of other films prior to this—but who was counting?)

Since Cullman had only one movie theater—and that capable of only 35mm—I did not see the wide-screen *Lawrence* that day. But it didn't matter. It was so original—so *different* from Hollywood desert pictures—and so uncompromising, that the loss of 70mm and stereo sound didn't matter.

The theater was packed—even the front row was filled—and the smell of wet wool permeated the air. I'd paid $1.75 from my penny piggy-bank to get in, and the level of my excitement was matched only by the decibel level of the audience before the lights dimmed. From the outset nothing was predictable about *Lawrence*—he died in the first five minutes, and the audience audibly *gasped* in puzzlement. Now what? Where was this movie going? That it took its own sweet time getting where it was going was another factor. But by the time Thomas Edward Lawrence put out a match with his fingertips we were all hooked. (As was a man named G. Gordon Liddy, who went around Washington, D.C. doing the same thing in 1972 and giving Lawrence's exact answer to inquiries about the pain. "The trick is in not minding that it hurts.")

Lawrence of Arabia was not the first anti-hero my generation ever saw—we'd grown up with the television playing Bogart movies into the wee hours of the morning—but he *was* the first *flawed* anti-hero we'd ever seen. Bogart always triumphed with a wisecrack and a cynical smile in the likes of *Casablanca*, *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Big Sleep*. He got the girl, he got the bad guys, and he got away with it. But T.E. Lawrence was riddled with self-doubt, sexual ambiguity, and manic- depressive tendencies. Yet we loved him even when we couldn't admire him. We strove to understand him even when he couldn't understand himself. ("Who *are* you?! Who *are* you?!" a military motorcyclist asks Lawrence when he stumbles out of the Sinai and is discovered standing on the edge of the Suez Canal. But Lawrence has no answer.) We were teenagers, who didn't know who *we* were, either. We, too, stood on the brink of adulthood simultaneously with an exotic war brewing in an alien land. *Lawrence* was a cautionary tale about the dangers of embracing that war and being done in by it. Lawrence's battle scenes told the truth about both our horror and our fascination with death. Lawrence's undoing is the needless massacre of a retreating Turkish column that stands between him and Damascus. The shock of My Lai and the atrocities of my generation's American soldiers in Vietnam still lay several years ahead in the '60s, but their first foreshadowing was in Lawrence's eyes when Omar Sharif tries in vain to stop the slaughter. "No prisoners! No prisoners!" Lawrence shouts, and he takes none.

Lawrence of Arabia would be used as inspiration for both the hawks and the doves in Congress throughout the '60s, but it concerned itself with more than just the fighting of World War I in the North Africa campaign. It also addressed the consequences of Lawrence's actions that we have had to live with ever since. The groundwork for Middle Eastern domination of the oil-dependent industrialized nations was laid out for us to see in *Lawrence*. "You were great," Lawrence whispers to Guinness's Prince Feisal before Aqaba. "Seven centuries ago," Feisal replies. "Time to be great again," the ambitious Lawrence answers back.

There were many revelations in *Lawrence* that first showing. One of them was the portrayal of the Bedouin leaders. In a movie full of career-making entrances, writer Robert Bolt (and the uncredited, blacklisted Michael Wilson) and director Lean give the most cinematic introductions to Lawrence's two closest Bedouin allies: Ali and Feisal. Much has always been made of Omar Sharif's entrance draped in black (the better to contrast with Lawrence all in white), center screen from a mile away. It's impact on first viewing is undeniable. But Feisal's entrance, screaming, "Stand and fight! Stand and fight!" as he chases a "modern" 1916 airplane on horseback, moved me more. Of course, the 19th-century man has no chance against 20th-century technology... until "military advisor" Lt. Lawrence reminds the princely, educated Feisal of the value of letting his men fight a guerrilla war on their home terrain ("The desert is an ocean where no oar is dipped") coupled with a uniting of the tribes. Too bad the "hawks" in Congress weren't paying attention

here: "The Arab strikes where he wants, when he wants, then disappears into the desert." If they had, they would have known the "primitive" Vietcong fighters really had the advantage and were bound to win, despite our planes and bombs, warships and napalm. After all, what is the Vietnamese jungle but a desert with trees?

Like the U.S. military machine that ran the Vietnamese War, Lawrence gets too full of himself about halfway through the movie. When told he's crazy to try to cross the Sinai alone, he replies, "Why not? Moses did!" When his best friend Ali (*Lawrence* was a "buddy" film—completely devoid of women, a full decade before the "buddy" film came into vogue in Hollywood) warns him not to go back into the Nefud Desert for a fallen soldier ("It is written"), Lawrence is quick to say "Nothing is written" before collapsing (symbolically) on Ali's waiting bed spread out on the sand after returning with the rescued man, Gasim. Through it all, it's obvious he's riding for a fall, and when it comes, when he is forced to shoot Gasim, it only infuriates Lawrence to be told that he had tempted fate one too many times—"So, it was written, after all." He is reminded.

When *Lawrence of Arabia* was re-released in the late 1960s, its prophetic qualities and uncanny ability to address the issues the '60s were grappling with were almost eerie. The Tet Offensive was in full swing when I sat in a movie theater in Westwood and heard the jeers and cat-calls that rose to a crescendo when Arthur Kennedy (looking like an appropriately world-weary journalist after a non-stop flight from New York to Spain the day before to replace an ailing Edmond O'Brien) states to Feisal that Americans "are a colonial people that are naturally sympathetic to other colonial people fighting for their freedom." This time we saw that line of dialogue jumped off the screen. In 1964 that scene had passed without a murmur.

In the early '70s, at the height of the oil crisis, I went to a revival house on Sunset Boulevard for a special showing of *Lawrence*. This time the audience roared with laughter when Feisal explains his longing for green fields and fountains: "The Arab does not like the desert, Lt. Lawrence, there is *nothing* in the desert." We now understood why the British and the Germans and the Turks had used the opportunity World War I afforded to fight over that giant sandbox and access to the Suez Canal. And that "Lawrence of Arabia" had been used, by both sides was its most important lesson ("Lawrence is a double-edged sword, is he not?" the canny Feisal sums up at the movie's end. "We are both equally glad to be rid of him."). After watching *Lawrence*, we should have known that *both* political parties wouldn't hesitate to betray the promise of our generation. And voting the Democrats out in 1968 because Nixon said he had a "secret plan for 'Peace with Honor'" became the biggest betrayal of us all



El Orences"

Alec Guinness's portrayal of Feisal was deliberate and measured, sly and articulate, with a high-pitched voice that had elicited titters from the 1964 audience. With the proliferation of Arab statesmen on the nightly news in the 1970s (they *all* seemed to have beautiful white teeth and looked heart-stoppingly exotic in the combination of a Saville Row suit and burnoose), I realized just how dead-on Guinness's portrayal was. "By God, they talk just like Alec Guinness!" I gleefully shouted to all within earshot at work. "Life imitates art!" I was promptly shouted down for that one—not one of my colleagues having ever heard the dictate "art imitates life."

In 1990 I worked on a movie starring Wings Hauser and G. Gordon Liddy (yes, that G. Gordon Liddy). I was cautioned to watch myself when around him, but I assured the producer that I could both understand him and get along with him. When I proved myself right, the producer asked me what the secret was. "There's no secret," I replied. "He's simply a person who misunderstood the life lessons of Lawrence of Arabia." At which point the producer smiled and missed my point. "Women! I'll never understand it, but all women I know love Peter O'Toole no matter what. No matter how old he gets, how hammy he acts, or how bad he looks."

Well, I guess that's true, in a way—I could forgive him any transgression,—because when I see that actor with the redundant name I always see Lawrence. The Lawrence. "El Orence" *Lawrence of Arabia*: backlit, on top of the train, smiling and confident in the full bloom of his 27 years. Facing the decade of the 1960s with unbounded pride and optimism. And riding for a fall that all of us would feel, from the jungles of Vietnam and the oil-rich Sahara desert to the halls of Congress and the White House itself. ■



Director David Lean

Headlines From Wholly weird

From China with love by the Sci-Fi guy, Forrest J Ackerman

The Monster Bash!

It was a groove-yard smash!

1500 fans had the time of their lives.

Not only did they come from all over the USA, but 4 were there from Mexico, and England, France and Germany were represented!

37-year-old fan Ron Adams pulled off the impossible, and inside of a year since the inception of the idea, presented appreciative fans with An Event To Remember.

Boris' Daughter Sara came from Karloffornia to charm the crowd.

Silvery haired Bela Jr. was a credit to his Draculean Dad.

Ron Chaney got a standing ovation after his talk to a crowded auditorium, and on two occasions was so emotional he almost burst into tears. At his table he had the first photos of himself in makeup, following in his great grandfather's famous footsteps.

Tom Savini was very much in evidence, and on one occasion transformed one fan into the Phantom of the Opera and another into Frankenstein.

The fabulous artist Tony Brzezinski, who has painted 105 paintings for me based on Paul, Finlay, Bok, Dold, Wesso and other famous artists of fantasialand, was there with his latest work in the crowded dealers' room. I bought his portrait of Lon Chaney Sr. as the ghoulish horror man in the lost film London After Midnight.

I gave a slideshow of "Wonders of the Ackermansion" and two talks, one about Chaney, Karloff, Lorre, Cushing, Landis, Lugosi, my parts in *Schlock The Banana Monster, Dracula Vs Frankenstein, The Time Travelers,* Michael Jackson's "Thriller", *Amazon Women On The Moon* (President of the United States), *Turkeys In Outer Space* (President Of The World), *Nudist Colony Of The Dead* (reduced to a Judge) and the second talk about experiences with HG Wells, Edgar Rice Burroughs, A Merritt, the first, second, third & fourth World Science Fiction Conventions, and questions answered from the floor.

Satyrday Nite was one of the great Acko-boo events of my life. An east coast celebration was made of my 80th birthday (actually I'm nearer my 81st: 24 Nov 97) in a style befitting a king. There were 6 huge birthday cakes. Gary Svehla of Fanex fame came to the mike and praised me. Others followed. With all the eulogies, I felt like I'd died and gone to Heaven. Various presents were given me, including a cute little figurine of my heroine, Vampirella. Nearly everyone called me Uncle Forry, with the exception of several who for the first time in my experience called me their Hero. My cup ranneth over.

The unveiling of the postage stamps featuring Chaney, Karloff & Lugosi was an event of a lifetime. The local postmistress made a touching speech and the siblings of Karloff, Lugosi & Chaney were indeed touched—especially the misty eyed Ron Chaney.

The surprise hit of the week was the appearance of a marvelous periodical called *Monster Mad*. I wholeheartedly recommend it. A copy may be had for $7 ppd.; contact website wvnvm.wvnet.edu/~ygor/monsbash.html

Fan Stephen Marcum of Blood Moon Creations did an incredible thing. He presented Sara Karloff, Bela Lugosi Jr. and Ron Chaney with large beautifully framed representative photos of their forebears, each autographed! Ron had never had a signature of his illustrious great grandfather. The combined gifts could easily have sold for $10,000, it was a wonderful gesture on Stephen's part and I for one wish to applaud him loudly on the cyberwaves.

And another round of applause for Ron Adams!

Readers: I've been up since 3:30 this morning with last minute preparations for my impending trip to China. It's 6:30 in the morning now, and at 10 I'll be off to the airport. I'm taking with me, by request, videocassettes of *Metropolis, Lost World* (original 1925 version), *The Invisible Man, King Kong, It Came From Outer Space, Just Imagine*, a lecture on Scientifilms that I did about 25 years ago and several tours of the Ackermansion. In the company of Fred Pohl, Elizabeth Hull, Takumi Shibano and other sci-fi celebrities from around the world, I'll be 10 days in Beijing and Cheng-du for the International Conference on Science Fiction. My next column should be a humdinger. This one is necessarily shorter than usual. You understand.

If humanly possible, I wish to die with "science fiction" on my lips. If one of the planes I'm on should crash, no one would ever know if with my last breath I uttered "science fiction." So I have taken, during recent flights, when I am about to take a nap, to quietly saying "science-fiction," so that if I should die during my sleep, the sci-fi world would know I died with "science-fiction" on my lips. Not, I hasten to assure you, that I have any premonition of disaster; I feel incredibly safe in the air because from 1939 till now, when Arthur C. Clarke and Ray Bradbury and Robert Heinlein and Fred Pohl and other celebrities, plus tons of fans, have flown all around the world, not a single sci-fi person has ever lost their lives in an air crash. So I don't think after more than 50 years of safety, the Fates are going to pick on me to be the first. I'm a man of many firsts but I don't expect to add *that* to my record.

Warmest wishes

(Stop the presses! Just as we are finalizing the page layout for this issue, comes the follow-up report from FJA on his return home from China, printed below. Welcome home Forry!!!)

THIS TIME I traveled halfway 'round the world for this column. The publisher will have to sell 5,000 extra copies to cover my costs. Fortunately my gourmet banquets were paid for: oriele's eggs, little eels, black chicken, Peking duck... Yes this Acker(China)man was in the Asian wonderland of ONE BILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND Chinese, whose sci-fi fans never heard of Frankenstein, Dracula, Bela Lugosi, Boris Karloff or (are you ready for this?) Ray Bradbury!!! But they knew me and I think perhaps 8 or 10 didn't get my autograph.

I brought the fans of Beijing (pop. 12 million) and Cheng-du (the Magician? pop. 10 million) videocassette copies of Bradbury's *It Came From Outer Space*, the popular American classic *The Day The Earth Stood Still, The Thing From Another World, Things To Come, Metropolis, Just Imagine* (the world 50 years hence and a rocketship to Mars) and several other scientifilms, also copies of *Spacemen & Women, Cult Movies, Wonderama, Ackermanthology*, my 4CDRoms, and other treasures to Oriental eyes. I gave them a slide show featuring Lon Chaney Sr. as the 100-year-old Mandarin in *Mr. Wu*, Karloff as the Frankenstein monster, Lugosi as Count Dracula, *Weird Tales* covers, the first *Amazing*, my reconstructed *Metropolis* robotrix and other slides that proved eyepopping to the eager sci-fi populace.

I walked through the palaces and art galleries of the Forbidden City. Cut the ribbon for the exhibit of a one-man space paintings show. Was interviewed for China's sole sci-fi publication, *Science Fiction World*, which began with 600 sales and has been worked up to 250,000 monthly by its enterprising lady editor Yang Xiao. Found, upon descending, I had climbed 451 (Fahrenheit!) steps of the Great Wall of China on an appropriately hellish hot day.

I was constantly in the company of 2 American astronauts and 3 Russian cosmonauts, sf authors James Gunn, Elizabeth Hull and David Hill, *Locus* editor/publisher Charles Bown, as well as pro's from Japan, Taiwan, Australia and Hong Kong. If you're familiar with the Japanese monster movie *Mothra*, you'll appreciate that a pair of Japanese entertainers went on stage one evening and sang the "Mosula" song of the tiny princesses for us.

Hugo Gernsback's pioneering classic "Ralph 124C41+" has been published in China and several works by Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov and James Gunn. They are beginning to see American blockbusters such as *Independence Day, Mars Attacks, Men In Black* and *Contact*. It is problematical if they will ever see *Robot Monster, Plan 9 From Outer Space, Dracula Vs. Frankenstein* or *Schlock*. As was repeatedly warned in early scientifilms, "There are some things Man was meant to leave alone."

Little children will probably tell their grandchildren they met Forrest J Ackerman, the great American astronaut. And have half a torn photograph to prove it: when I tried to give a picture of myself to a kid I fancied, a dozen hands grabbed for it and usually succeeded in destroying it. No complete picture of me may exist in China. Except perhaps in an issue of *Cult Movies* or *Spacemen & Spacewomen*. ■

Cult Movie People: Bill Chancellor





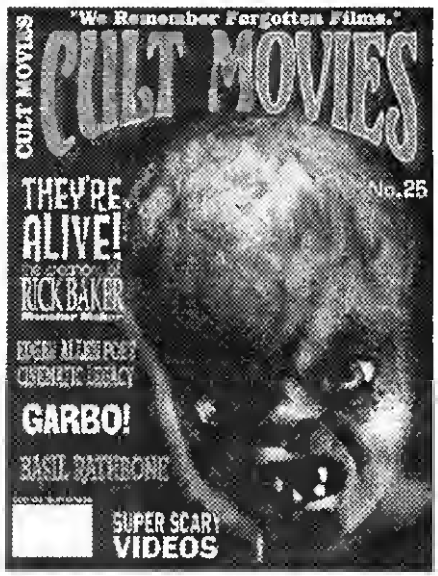
Cult Movies *cover artist Bill Chancellor and his friend Karen Moran.*

A master of painting and computer graphics, Bill Chancellor has shown the diversity of his talents and styles by designing the front covers of our three most recent issues. The psychedelic '60s Vincent Price this time around was Bill's creation, as was the wild Phantom the issue before. One of his greatest creations was the moody rendition of Glenn Strange as Frankenstein's Monster for issue #21. Bill also designed the Mr. Spock art for that issues' *Spacemen* side, making four covers so far.

Like many other great things, Bill came to us via Forrest J Ackerman. Wanting to design covers for the new *Famous Monsters*, Bill had contacted Ackerman with samples of artwork just about the time Forry was no longer associated with *FM*. He passed the artwork and a phone # on to us, and the rest is history.

Like most of us, Bill Chancellor's early inspiration was seeing a copy of *Famous Monsters*. "I thought those Basil Gogos were tremendous." From there he got interested in everything from comic art to designing monster models. By the time he saw *King Kong* on television, he was hooked for life. He told us, "I knew then I wanted to do something in the artistic field and work it in with movies."

In a short but busy career, Bill has created artwork for publications, posters, and even T-shirts. Currently he's employed morning, noon and night by several companies who manufacture T-shirts showing celebrity and cartoon faces. For the future, Chancellor has several aspirations. "I'd like to do a cover for *Wired* magazine. I like their stuff, and I'm working on a concept that would really show them off at the newsstand." In the meantime, he's just sent us the artwork for our next issue, which may well become our best cover ever. "I'll keep working for you guys as long as you need me," he states. "I love doing movie magazine art. Also like to do movie posters or video box art."

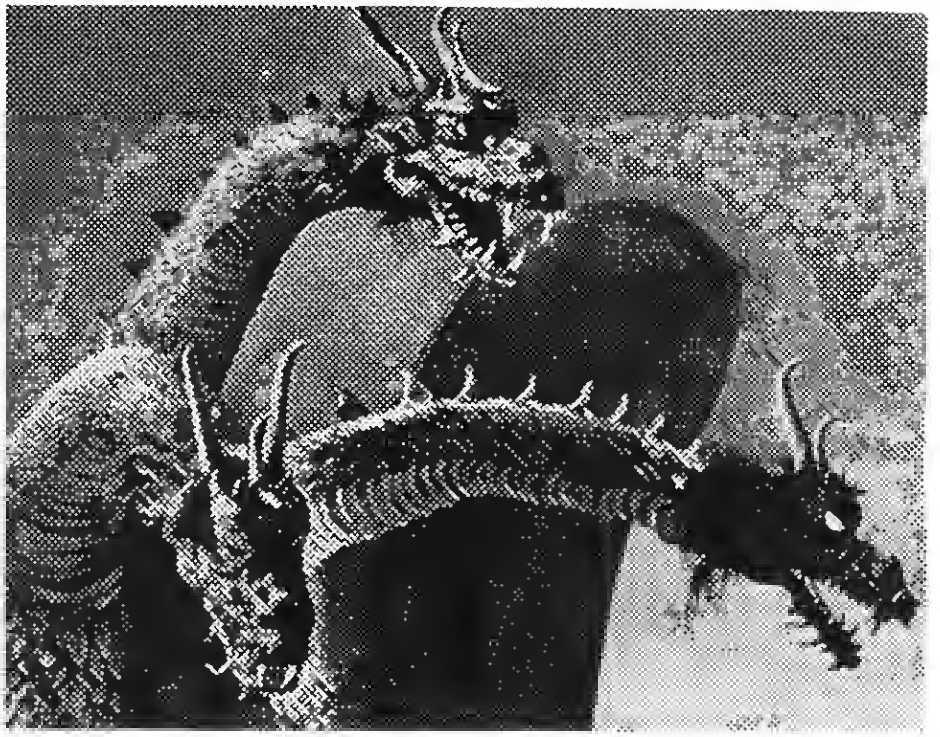


Watch for this Chancellor creation on your newsstand in 1998. His greatest cover yet?????????

If you've got a project in mind for an artist who comes with the highest recommendation, you can get in touch with Bill Chancellor at: 1428 Backus, El Paso, TX 79925. And tell him *Cult Movies* sent you!■



Ghidrah the Three Headed Monster



A retrospective by Stuart Galbraith IV

Nineteen sixty-four was a busy year for Toho Studios' monster movies unit. The year began with *Godzilla vs. the Thing*, the third Godzilla sequel, and continued that summer with the little-seen (at least in the U.S.) ***Dagora, the Space Monster***, and ended with yet another Godzilla picture, ***Ghidrah—The Three-Headed Monster*** (1964), perhaps the most representative of the '60s movies featuring the giant, atomic-powered lizard. Made during the creative peak of the half dozen or so individuals most associated with the series in its Golden Age, *Ghidrah*, released in Japan as *San daikaiju chikyu saidai no kessen* ("Three Giant Monsters Battle on Earth") is both grand and gaudy, with Godzilla, Rodan, Mothra, and Ghidrah (hey, that's four giant monsters!) duking it out while assassins, geologists, amnesiactic royalty and Japanese pop stars furiously scurry about.

Ghidrah was the fifth Godzilla movie. *Godzilla King of the Monsters!* (1956, released in Japan in 1954 as *Gojira*) had been a huge international hit, but the quickie sequel, *Gojira no Gyakushu/Gigantis the Fire Monster* (1955/59), proved little more than a disjointed programmer and did nothing to further the genre. *King Kong vs. Godzilla* (1962), a film originally conceived without Godzilla at all had been—and would remain—Toho Studios' most lucrative monster movie. It was also the first of the series in color, anamorphic wide screen (Toho Scope) and stereo (Perspecta), and the first Godzilla movie with heavy doses of satire. *Godzilla vs. the Thing* (1964), a sequel to both *King Kong vs. Godzilla* and the studio's 1961 hit *Mosura/Mothra* (1961), did "boffo b.o." that May. Wasting little time, the studio put *Ghidrah* into production and somehow managed to release the picture that December, less than eight months later, sandwiching *Dagora, the Space Monster* in between, and all three were made with virtually the same cast and crew.

The story: A group of astronomers looking for UFOs in the nighttime sky abandon their search. They blame a reporter from Tokyo Broadcasting, Naoko Shindo (Yuriko Hoshi), who doesn't believe in flying saucers, for their nonappearance. Then, out of the night sky, what at first appears to be a flying saucer flies past. However, it turns out to be a false alarm—just a shooting star.

Meanwhile, a beautiful princess (Akiko Wakabayashi) is flying to Japan, trying to elude assassins who have already murdered her father. One of the leaders plotting to overthrow the regime, Malness (Hisaya Ito), has already planted a bomb aboard the plane. Before the bomb goes off, however, a bright light appears just outside the princess' window. A ghostly voice tells her, "Stand up Princess and leave this place. Hurry!" Out the escape hatch she goes. The plane explodes seconds later.

The following morning, geologists, led by Professor Murai (Hiroshi Koizumi), travel to the mountainous region where the shooting star has fallen. When they arrive, their compasses go crazy and their picks and shovels are magnetically drawn toward the meteorite.

Elsewhere, a plainly dressed woman who claims to be a prophetess from Mars warns skeptical crowds that doom and destruction are imminent. The crowds scoff at her predictions, but Naoko's editor (Kenji Sahara) feels that the woman, who bears a remarkable resemblance to the princess, would be a perfect subject for their "Mysteries in the Twentieth Century" television show and assigns Naoko to tail the prophetess-princess. Naoko's brother, Detective Shindo (Yosuke Natsuki), also notes the woman's resemblance to the princess. Unfortunately, Malness also recognizes the princess when her picture appears in the newspaper.

Meanwhile, Mothra's priestesses, the twin fairies (Emi and Yumi Ito) appear on a TV show called "What Are They Doing Now?" (hosted by two fast-talking comedians, one with a voice dubbed by an actor imitating Buddy Hackett's Chinese waiter character). A young boy has come to the show wanting to know how Mothra's doing these days. "The old one died, you know," one of the fairies explains. But the larva (what happened to the second one?) is "fine, even though he's just a baby.) The fairies sing "Call Happiness," "in their own exotic dialect," as one of the show's hosts explains, and we see natives on Infant Island (changed from Mothra Island in the last film) dancing around Mothra, Jr.

The next day Shindo interviews a fisherman (Ikio Sawamura), who says he fished the princess, very much alive, out of the water several evenings before. She exchanged a royal bracelet for the fisherman's clothes. One of the astronomers seen at the film's opening (a miniature flying saucer left over from *Battle In Outer Space* hangs in his office) offers a rather unlikely explanation as to how the princess might have survived falling out of an airplane thousands of feet in the air—something to do with different dimensions and the curvature of space and time.

Anyway, the prophetess-princess next turns up at the base of a volcano, warning that the monster Rodan will soon appear. And indeed he does; that is, at least one of the two monsters thought destroyed in the 1956 film appears at the volcano's base (for some reason Rodan's voice is dubbed with Godzilla's familiar roar in this shot). The fairies board a ship bound, it seems, for Infant Island. A reporter asks the fairies about Rodan's next move (and, inexplicably, Godzilla's as well). The prophetess appears, warning passengers not to sail. She predicts the ship will soon be destroyed.

That evening Godzilla, having survived his encounter with Mothra's larvae in *Godzilla Vs. The Thing*, rises out of the water and sets the ship afire with his atomic breath. Naoko assumes responsibility for the prophetess, checking her into a hotel. Unfortunately, it happens to be the same hotel where Malness and his henchman are holed up. The gangsters corner the emotionless princess, who seems to be suffering some kind of amnesia. The fairies, heeding the prophetess' warning about the ship, climb out of Naoko's purse. Shindo tells his sister, Naoko, the prophetess' true identity. They take her to Dr. Tsukamoto (Takashi Shimura), who runs a battery of tests. Eventually, the princess-prophetess explains that centuries ago, Mars was invaded by a giant monster named Ghidrah. Though thousands of years ahead of us intellectually, the Martian people were wiped out within a month's time. Now Ghidrah's on Earth.

Soon enough, the meteorite that Professor Murai has been studying splits open and in a spectacular ball of fire, Ghidrah appears. A three-headed, golden flying dragon, Ghidrah takes to the skies, flying over cities and destroying everything in its path, thanks to lightning-like arcs of electricity shooting out of each of its three mouths. Godzilla

and Rodan are creating all manner of havoc as well, though they seem to be concentrating more on fighting each other rather than destroying Japan's major cities.

The government suggests that since Mothra defeated Godzilla (in the previous film), perhaps the big bug might be able to do the same to Ghidrah. The fairies explain that Mothra is no match for Ghidrah, but suggest that perhaps Mothra could persuade Godzilla and Rodan "to cooperate" and that the three Earth monsters working together might be able to defeat the golden dragon. Mothra arrives in Japan, but Godzilla and Rodan, in monster talk (!), explain they'd rather fight each other than help mankind (the fairies obligingly interpret this for the benefit of their Japanese companions). "Awww, these monsters are as stupid as human beings!" Shindo says.

Mothra goes at it all alone but is clearly no match for the mighty Ghidrah. Godzilla and Rodan have a change of heart, however, and the *Greatest Battle on Earth* (as the film was called in Japan) is on. Malness makes another attempt on the princess' life, but the battling monsters create an avalanche which kills the assassin. A fall restores the princess' memory, and Mothra, Rodan and Godzilla defeat Ghidrah, who makes a hasty retreat toward outer space.

Ghidrah: The Three-Headed Monster is an episodic if lively entry in the Godzilla series. Although made quickly, the film doesn't look rushed, except perhaps in Shinichi Sekizawa's uneven, convoluted script, further compromised by Continental's slapdash Americanization. Several ideas are introduced, then forgotten. We're told early on there's a mysterious heat wave in the middle of winter; and although the heat wave is emphasized early in the story, it's forgotten by the picture's end. It's also never really clear how and why the princess became a prophetess from Mars. The general idea seems to be that a handful of Martians fled to the Earth centuries ago, and more or less evolved to human form. The Martian intellect was lost over time, though Martian instinct kicks in during times of trouble. That doesn't explain the bright light that approached the princess' plane, however.

Still, this plot device does offer an interesting variation on ideas addressed earlier in the BBC television serial, *Quatermass And The Pit* (1958) and later in Stanley Kubricks *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). The Americanization only serves to break the film up further. Several scenes and individual shots are all too obviously edited out of sequence. A reporter asks the twin fairies about Godzilla before he even appears. When Godzilla finally does emerge, he spots Rodan in the night sky (a simple but extremely effective shot), in footage obviously edited out of a later sequence. Perhaps the most glaring example of this cavalier editing occurs when the king of the monsters is first seen hitting the Japanese mainland, followed inexplicably by a shot of him still in the water, approaching land! People, not monsters, were still the film's stars at this point, though Godzilla and company dominate the film's climax.

This is really the film where Godzilla begins a transformation from evil menace to Protector of Earth. It's also the first film where he begins to take on decidedly human characteristics. In a moment more akin to Laurel and Hardy than Godzilla and Rodan, the monsters seem to laugh uproariously at one another when Mothra sprays his silky web



Yosuke Natsuki, Eiko Wakabayashi and Yuriko Hoshi in Ghidrah — the Three-Headed Monster

material at the monsters to get their attention. That the monsters can also talk to one another is more than a bit absurd. (One of the film's silliest moments occurs when the fairies are shocked by Godzilla's apparent off-color remarks. "Godzilla! What terrible language!" exclaim the fairies.)

Godzilla, downright villainous in *Godzilla Vs The Thing*, winds up saving young Mothra, the very creature he tried to destroy in the previous film. And while Godzilla is still seen as a threat early on, he's practically loveable by the grand finale. Rodan's transformation is less subtle. Little more than a flying dinosaur in his first film, Rodan was redesigned with more anthropomorphic features for this new picture. The face is much more comical, augmented by a wildly springy neck which suggests a monstrous jack-in-the-box. Mothra, seen here in caterpillar form, looks pretty much as he did in the last film, and *Markalite* magazine claims that the same costume-prop was used.

Ghidrah makes the first of several appearances in this film. An inspired creation, Ghidrah is a wholly Japanese monster, based on the multi-headed dragon seen in Toho's *The Three Treasures* (1959). The monster's first appearance, in a ball of fire, was so impressive that this footage would be used in all of the monster's subsequent appearances (and updated for 1991's *Godzilla Vs King Ghidorah*). Other Ghidrah effects footage would be utilized extensively and obviously in later features as well.

Yosuke Natsuki (b. 1936) was a minor leading player at Toho. A protegee of the late producer Tomoyuki Tanaka, Natsuki's roles were tailored after Nikkatsu star Yujiro Ishihara. By all accounts, Natsuki was a roguish sort of actor and practical joker, who would roam the studio on his motorcycle, giving rides to all of Toho's pretty "New Faces." He got his big break playing the leading role in Toho's all-star war epic *I Bombed Pearl Harbor* (also released as *Storm Over the Pacific*, 1960), and appeared mostly in war pictures, crime films, and samurai dramas, including *Yojimbo* (1961), *Chushingura* (1962), and *The Weed of Crime* (1964). He had a bit role in *The H-Man* (1958), as a witness to the car accident which opens the film and, just prior to *Ghidrah*, had played the leading role in *Dagora, the Space Monster*. Akihiko Hirata plays Natsuki's boss in *Ghidrah*; 20 years later, Natsuki was asked to replace the dying actor as the lead scientist in *Godzilla 1985* (1984).

"[Director Ishiro] Honda was very gentle," Natsuki says. "I worked on several of his films, but I never saw him get angry. The schedule was not so tight at the time, and we usually shot one scene in the morning and one in the afternoon. All of us, the actors and the crew, went to his house and drank beer or had barbecues with his family after work. He was a gentleman with a smile both at work and at home."

"I made my debut in his film *Inao—The Story of an Iron Arm* (1959)," Yuriko Hoshi told me in a recently. "[It was] about a famous baseball pitcher. It wasn't a really great part; I had a small role. The location was done in far-off Oita, in Kyushu, and because Honda was so busy with the film, we didn't get to my scene—which was no more than a few lines—for quite a while and I was stranded there for a month. Several years later, when I made *Godzilla vs. the Thing*, Honda apologized for making me wait so long in Kyushu! I was surprised that he even remembered."

Ishiro Honda (1911-1993) didn't care for the series' move toward satire, or its anthropomorphization of Godzilla. As he told *Tokyo Journal* writer James Bailey in 1991, "That was due to a huge fall...oops, maybe I shouldn't phrase it that way, since my critics might want some ammunition to use against me. But I sup-

(continued)



pose there's no other way to say it there was a huge fall in the average age of Godzilla fans, so Toho decided it would be a good idea to make him more heroic and less scary. I didn't like the idea, but I couldn't really oppose it We didn't have many rights then Once you made a film it became company property."

"At first children would come to the set and were too frightened to have their picture taken with *Godzilla*," sighs Jun Fukuda, who directed *Godzilla versus the Sea Monster* (1966) and Son of Godzilla (1967), "Now everybody wants to have their picture taken with him!"

TeruyoshiNakano, an assistant to Eiji Tsuburaya and later special effects director of the '70s Godzillas, counters, "I believe that without any changes to Godzilla's character, the series would not have been able to continue. If Godzilla had remained a villain, probably only hardcore Godzilla fans would have watched the movies, and not the general audience. I think it was correct to change Godzilla's character; it was a reaction to the times and the changes in the audience. But myself, I basically like a scary Godzilla rather than a good Godzilla "

Yuriko Hoshi (b 1945) was nearing her peak of fame in 1964. A former Takarazuka actress, Hoshi joined Toho in the late-1950s while still a teenager. Modeling herself after Audrey Hepburn (still probably the most revered Western actress in Japan), Hoshi gained lasting fame as Yuzo Kayama's girlfriend in Toho's long-running "Young Guy" film series, while also appearing in numerous jidaigeki for directors like Hiroshi Inagaki. "At the time, I didn't know what the kaiju eiga [monster movies] were like, but I had a strong interest in it. Actually, I didn't have much opportunity to act with Godzilla! I was in front of the blue screen in composite shots. After the shooting, I came to know what it was all about and was impressed. I was really impressed by The Peanuts' singing, and how they were made to appear so tiny!"

Akiko Wakabayashi (b. 1939) is best known in the West as Aki, the Japanese spy who helps James Bond in the first half of *You Only Live Twice* (1967). Her other genre credits include *King Kong vs Godzilla* (1962) and *Dagora, the Space Monster*, in which she played a diamond-obsessed moll. "Ms. Wakabayashi was charming, but I don't think she was passionate about her work," says Yosuke Natsuki. "She was more feminine than Yuriko Hoshi. I still don't understand why she retired so suddenly."

Hiroshi Koizumi (b. 1926), in the rather thankless role of Hoshi's geologist boyfriend, had been a big star at Toho in the 1950s, mainly in romance pictures, but by 1964 had been demoted to films like this mainly to beef up the marquee value. His other kaiju eiga credits include *Gigantis the Fire Monster* (1955), *Mothra* (1961), *Attack of the Mushroom People* and Atragon (both 1963). Koizumi later made a killing in Tokyo real estate and happily retired from acting, though he has, on occasion been coaxed back for cameo roles in these pictures; he virtually reprises his geologist role in *Godzilla 1985*.

Takashi Shimura (1905-1982), as the elderly Dr. Sukamoto, was one of Japan's great screen actors He played the leader of the *Seven Samurai* (1954), and was the dying government worker in *Ikiru* (1952). Between assignments for Kurosawa and others he found time to appear in *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!*, *Gigantis the Fire Monster*, *The Mysterians* (1957), *Gorath* (1962), *Frankenstein Conquers the World* (1965), and others. Shimura's typically sincere performance lends an air of authority to the rather ridiculous business of shock treatments for the princess.

The Peanuts, Emi and Yumi Ito (b. 1941), were twin pop stars from 1959. They were managed by Watanabe Production (sic), which had strong ties with Toho. At about the same time, Toho had made film stars out of Hitoshi Ueki and the Crazy Cats, and The Peanuts were regulars on their TV show. They struck gold playing the twin fairies in *Mothra*, and reprised their roles in *Godzilla vs the Thing*. They also appeared (normal-sized) in various Crazy Cats comedies and in two starring features, *Me and Me* (1962), and *Double Trouble* (aka *Young Comrades*, 1963). The Peanuts have retired from performing though they're recordings are still popular in Japan.

Ikio Sawamura (1905-1975) has a nice bit as the little old man who fishes the princess out of the water, only to be hauled away by suspicious detectives. Sawamura specialized in these kinds of roles: he was the bell ringer in Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* (1961), and appeared in nearly every major sci-fi film at Toho from *Battle in Outer Space* (1959) until *Terror of Mechagodzilla* (1975), made shortly before

his death Hisaya Ito (b 1938) plays Malmess the Assassin, a role intended for Yoshio Tsuchiya, who had to drop out owing to his commitment on Kurosawa's *Red Beard* (1965). Originally groomed as a handsome leading player (this build-up is evident in *The Mysterians*), Ito's career never took off, but he continued to appear in major supporting roles as late as *Destroy All Monsters* (1968).

The music for *Ghidrah—The Three-Headed Monster* was written by the great Akira Ifukube (b. 1914); David Milner's three interviews with the composer have been featured in the pages of *Cult Movies*. His score incorporates themes from *Godzilla vs the Thing*, while reworking music from *Varan the Unbelievable* (1958) into a motif he has used for both Rodan and Ghidrah. It's a terrific score, wonderfully pounding and relentless.

The Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film liked *Ghidrah*, calling it "one of the best Japanese monster bashes." *Phil Hardy's Science Fiction* got the order of the films mixed up, believing *Monster Zero* (1965) had preceded this entry. Nonetheless, its reviewer also liked *Ghidrah*, adding that the special effects were "better than usual." *Variety's* "Robe" said, "When the viewer finds himself cheering on the trio of unlikely allies, it's a tribute to Honda's ability to capture an audience... The dubbing is, as usual, atrocious." *The New York Times'* Vincent Canby, reviewing the film on a double bill with *Harum Scarum* ("The Beat & the Beast make a holiday feast!" screamed the ads), said *Ghidrah* "at least provides a smile or two as it lurches and lunges through a veritable anthology of Japanese picture plots... the film... is strictly for the comic book set." The Motion Picture Guide rated the film **1/2 stars and complained about the dubbing. "A blind man could've done better." Greg Shoemaker, in his examination of Toho's films, found the script "confusing," saying it also cheapened the character development in favor of extensive monster footage.

Those frustrated by awful panned-and-scanned U.S. versions are urged to seek out Toho Video's home video version, which has been released both on tape and laserdisc. The picture transfer is superb, with exquisite color. This letterboxed edition shows off Honda and Tsuburaya's often beautiful wide screen compositions (especially during the Peanuts' big number, where their faces are supered on the extreme left and right of the image, over scenes on Infant Island).

In addition to the usual trailer, the laserdisc features 8mm footage taken during the production of the film, and of a promotional visit by Godzilla to an amusement park. At the park, Godzilla threatens a slot-car track, and despite the obviously cold weather he's swarmed by fans. Best of all we get to see the monster suits in various stages of construction (the Rodan costume appears particularly uncomfortable!). There are brief glimpses of Tsuburaya, spfx cameraman Teisho Arikawa and a very young Teruyoshi Nakano, along with dozens of middle-aged women patiently gluing tiles to the roofs of miniature buildings. The packaging is attractive, and the liner notes/insert (by Osamu Kishikawa), features several nice behind-the-scenes production photos.

The film a big hit in Japan, and one of the last to reach a wide, not-just-kids audience. Nonetheless, Honda remained ever-modest about his work. "I never said 'well done' after making any of my films," Honda said. "Eiji Tsuburaya and I would



get together after filming and our conversations would go: 'Well, what do you give this one? A seventy?' 'No, maybe about a sixty.' And we'd get harder on ourselves as time went on because we were supposed to know more about filmmaking. Always in the back of your mind there's the realization that a film is forever and its influence is going to outlive you. So you tend to be very strict when judging the final product."

Well, 33 years have passed since its Japanese premiere. Honda and Tsuburaya are both gone, but *Ghidrah—The Three-Headed Monster* remains a supremely satisfying monster epic.

Special Thanks to James Bailey, Steve Ryfle, Yukari Fujii and Atsushi Sakahara for their contributions to this article.

Ghidrah—The Three-Headed Monster/San daikaiju chikyu saidai no kessen ("The Greatest Giant Monster Battle On Earth"). Executive Producer, Tomoyuki Tanaka; Director, Ishiro Honda; Screenplay, Shinichi Sekizawa; Director of Photography, Hajime Koizumi, Music, Akira Ifukube, Song: "Call Happiness," Music, Hirosfu Miyagawa, Lyrics, Tokiko Iwatani; Editor, Ryohei Fujii; Art Director, Takeo Kita; Lighting Supervisor, Shoshichi Kojima; Sound Recording, Fumio Yanoguchi; Sound Effects, Hishashi Shimonaga, Toho Sound Effects Group; Sound, Toho Recording Centre; Production Manager, Shigeru Nakamura; Assistant to the Director, Ken Sano, Sound Technician, Osamu Chiku; Assistant Manager, Tadashi Koibe. Toho Special Effects Group: Director, Eiji Tsuburaya; Photographers, Teisho Arikawa, Mototaka Tomioka; Matte Photography, Yukio Manoda, Taka Yuki, Matte Process Work, Hiroshi Mukoyama; Set Decoration and Suit Design, Akira Watanabe; Lighting, Kuichiro Kishida; Assistant Director, Teruyoshi Nakano; Assistant Process, Koichi Kawakita.

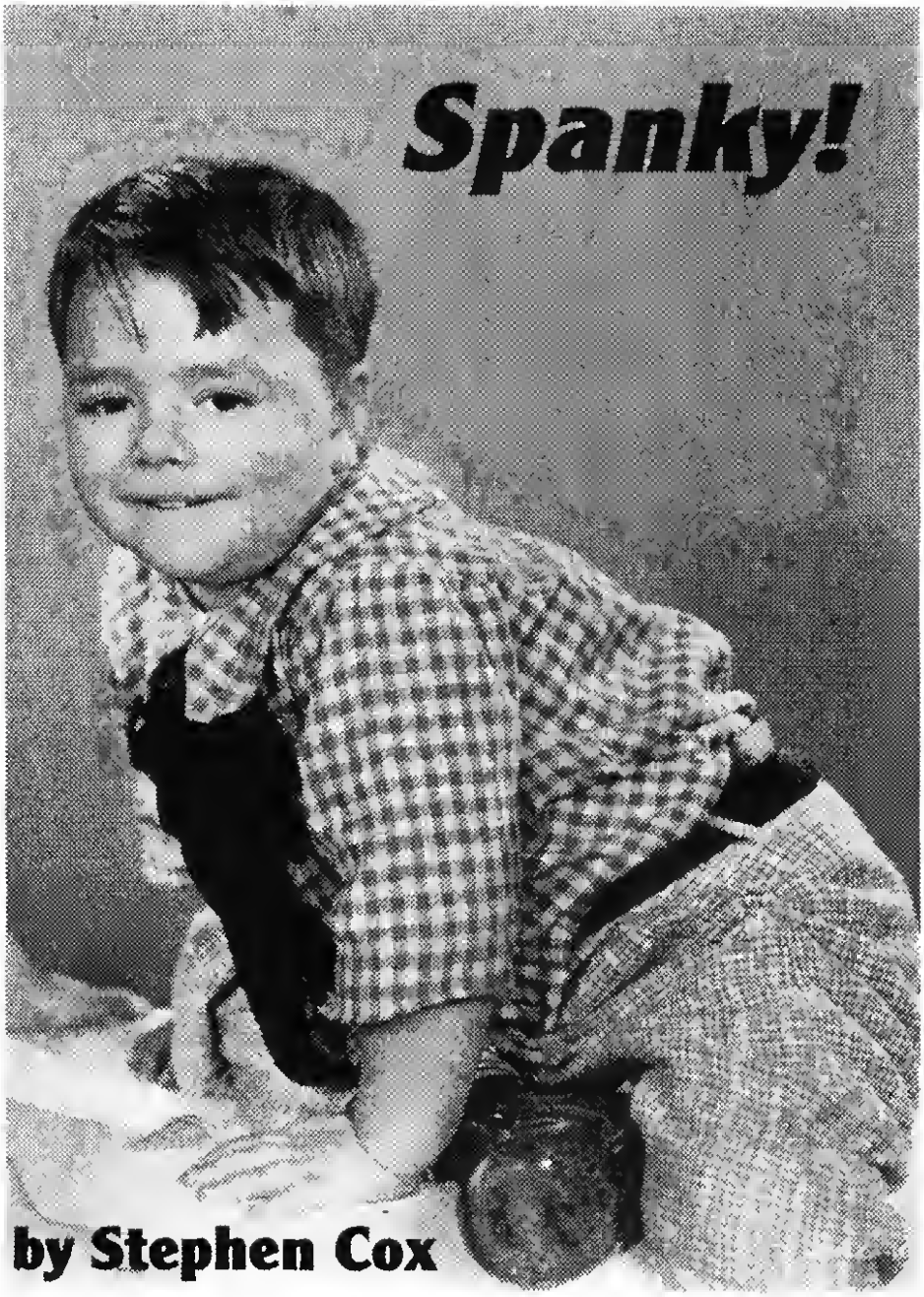
Cast: Yosuke Natsuki (Detective Shindo), Yuriko Hoshi (Naoko Shindo), Hiroshi Koizumi (Professor Murai), Takashi Shimura (Dr. Tsukamoto), Emi Ito and Yumi Ito [The Peanuts] (Mothra's priestesses), Akiko Wakabayashi (Mas Dorina Salno [Princess Selina Salno]), Hisaya Ito (Malmess [Malness]), Akihiko Hirata (Chief Detective Okita), Minoru Takada (parliment chairman), Kenji Sahara (Chief Editor Kanamaki), Ikio Sawamura (fisherman), Yoshifumi Tajima (ship's captain), Shigeki Ishida (man at Diet Building), Eisei Amamoto (Woo, the princess' aide), Yoshio Kosugi (native chief), Haruya Kato (reporter), Senkichi Omura (man who offers to retrieve hat), Toru Ibuki (tall would-be assassin), Kazuo Suzuki (short would-be assassin), Susumu Kurobe (mustached would-be assassin), Kozo Nomura, Jun Kuroki (geologists), Somesho Matsumoto (UFO expert who explains princess' fall), Heichiro "Henry" Okawa (UFO watcher), Haruo Nakajima (Godzilla), Shoichi "Solomon" Hirose (Ghidrah [King Ghidorah]), Kumi Mizuno (voice instructing princess to abandon airplane) Yuriko Hanabusa, Nakatiro Tomita, Shin Otomo, Yukaka Nakayama, Senya Aozora, Ichiya Aozora, Junichiro Mukai, Yoshiniko Furuta, Shoji Ikeoa, Hideo Shibuya, Kenchiro Katsumoto, Katsumi Tezuka, Koji Uno, Daisuke Inoue, Oshio Miura, Tamami Urayama, Tokuzo Komaga, Mitsuo Isuda, Yoshio Hattori, Kenji Tsubono, Kazo Imai, Suburo Kadowaki, Kenzo Echigo, Toku Ihara, Bin Furuya, Yutaka Oka, Koji Uraga, Haruya Sakamoto.

A Toho Co., Ltd. Production. Eastman Color (processed by Tokyo Laboratory, Ltd.). Toho Scope. 92 minutes. Released December 20, 1964.

U.S. Version: Released by Continental Distributing, Inc. English-dubbed. A Walter Reade-Sterling, Inc. Presentation. Americanization by Bellucci Productions; English Dialogue/Dubbing Director, Joseph Bellucci; Additional Music and Sound Effects, Filmsounds, Inc.; Post-Production Consultant, Ray Angus; Additional Optical Photography, Film Cinematics, Inc. Prints by Movielab. Actress Mizuno's participation is unconfirmed. 81 minutes. No MPAA rating. Released September 1965. Reissued in Japan in 1971 (re-edited by Ishiro Honda to 73 minutes) as Gojira Mosura Kingughidorah: Chikyu saidai no kessen ("Godzilla, Mothra, King Ghidorah: The Greatest Battle on Earth"). Followed by *Monster Zero* (Kaiju daisenso, 1965).

Stuart Galbraith IV is the author of Japanese Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films *(McFarland & Co., 1994),* The Japanese Filmography *(McFarland, 1996), and the forthcoming* Monsters Are Attacking Tokyo: The Incredible World of Japanese Fantasy Films *(Feral House, 1997)*■

Spanky!



by Stephen Cox

Following one of his college lectures in Quincy, Missouri, one evening, George "Spanky" McFarland invited me to join him at a little pub near the university. It was Mother's Day, and he knew there wasn't much to do in the town that night, so we sat across from each other in a dark, wooden booth and clinked mugs before downing the first sip. I congratulated him on a very interesting show, and we chatted for an hour or so. Nobody bothered us, nobody recognized him. It wasn't a place where everybody knew his name.

Earlier in the day I interviewed Spanky for a magazine piece about his career as an "Our Gang" alum and his life and family among other topics. I'll never forget his chubby jowls wobbling as he demonstrated for me his double-take and even his triple-take expression—both taught to him by comedy master, Stan Laurel.

Spanky was kind of a stoic, serious fellow, maybe a little shy. These days he was still stocky in build, well-dressed, perfectly clean-shaven with salt and pepper hair. He had small, stubby hands and evenly tanned skin, darkened by years of playing golf in the Texas sun. Over the ensuing years we had stayed in touch slightly. I guess the last time I saw him he was, again, in a bar. This time, it was in a great little cameo appearance on the final season of the hit sitcom, "Cheers." That was the last we all saw of ol' Spanky.

George Robert Philips McFarland went from the silver screen to selling televisions as a career. Way back in 1932, George (originally nicknamed "Sonny," but later a reporter suggested "Spanky" and it stuck) began appearing in short-subject comedies at the Hal Roach Studios. He was a tender, cute little toddler who shined like no other.

"There are some things I remember, and some things I don't," he prefaced. "I started when I was three. You don't remember everyday happenings in your life at that age. If I were to ask you what you did the day of your fifth birthday, you couldn't



tell me. What about your tenth birthday? You assume that I was really aware of being in the movies and I knew I was in the film business, but it was no big deal because I grew up in the movies. That was normal for me.

"Films didn't hold any interest for me," he added. "I didn't go into a scene with Alfalfa and say, 'Gosh, I'll remember this scene the rest of my life.' You just don't do that."

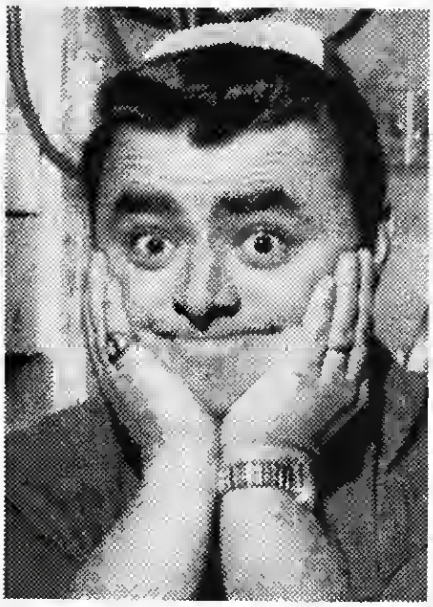
Probably the best known of them all, the beanie-topped Little Rascal didn't mind sharing his hazy memories of those diaper days in front of a camera. In a private interview, and in front of an audience, he answered any question, personal or otherwise (...and no, there never was any hanky-panky between Darla and Spanky). He was ready to shoot replies in a New York minute and took his Texas time doing it.

Spanky spoke very candidly, which surprised me. "I'm not wealthy. I own my own home, but I still need to bring in an income just like anyone else," he said. "I don't consider speaking at colleges work. I enjoy talking to groups about my child career."

He told me, though, how he got impatient with reporters who didn't do their homework. One, for instance, had quizzed him about how many "Our Gang" shorts were filmed in color. Behind his silver, wire-frame glasses, his eyes cringed.

Spanky's debut was in an Our Gang comedy called "Free Eats," released in 1932. He sported a little tam-o'-shanter cap and miniature golfing togs—wardrobe which surprisingly survived





Spanky in 1959 (Stephen Cox collection)



through the years until it was swiped.

"During a college show I did in 1985," he said, "I had the little costume locked up in the activity director's office for safe keeping. When we went to get it before the show, it was gone. I was really hurt. It meant a lot to me. My mother had kept it all these years in a little plastic bag. I had a five hundred dollar reward out for it and I just recently got it back. The person who stole it returned it, no doubt about that. I paid him."

Spanky explained that his mother, Virginia McFarland, was not far from his side when he was making movies.

"Somebody had to be on the set all day with the kids, but she stayed out of the filmmaking," he said. "Other than looking out for my physical welfare and listening for bad language on the set, she didn't get involved. 'Course, even then, she didn't have to mess with it, because the welfare representative from the state of California was on the set. They didn't allow any garbage to go on. Once in a while, a word would slip out, but that's no big deal."

It wasn't until long after Spanky's debut that the Jackie Coogan Bill went into effect. In an attempt to thwart rela-thieves, a child actor's earnings were mandatorily placed in a trust fund. Upon signing a five-year contract in 1936, newspapers proclaimed young Spanky to be one of the highest salaried juveniles in Hollywood. Reflecting on that, he wouldn't venture to estimate how much he earned as a Rascal in nearly 100 films because he never saw any of it.

"My money was used to support the family," Spanky quietly revealed. My father did nothing. I supported the family. I don't remember resenting it that much. I have wondered a couple of times why he didn't do anything. But you can't relive your life, so it doesn't make any difference. I don't like to make judgment calls based on 'what if' because you can't change it. We can sit here and use twenty-twenty hindsight until we're in the grave and it won't change the past."

Spanky didn't hesitate describing some low points in his life. "I've been broke most of my adult life," he said. "Until 1960, I really struggled. I got married in 1955 and my wife and I worked." Over the decades, his employment included attending a hamburger stand, working at a soft-drink plant and even making popsicles. "We were doing all right, but most of the hard times came when I was single." Years later, Spanky worked for the Philco-Ford Television company as a senior sales manager, where he purposely shed his childhood nickname. "They wouldn't buy televisions from a guy named Spanky, but they would from someone named George."

Even though he was in his sixties when we discussed his life, he was now indifferent about being addressed as George or "Spanky." He seemed to be mellowing about his roots and said he was proud and excited to attend a few Our Gang reunions during the 1980s. "I was surprised," Spanky said, "a lot of them really didn't have any outside interests. I don't know how they get through life. Some of them wander around being the world's oldest Our Gang celebrity. But I've got other things to do."

(continued)



Spanky, Steve Allen and Eugene "Porky" Lee. Photo by Bob Satterfield

Speaking of other kids from the Gang, he mentioned a few who had passed on. Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer, the freckled crooner with the pointy cowlick "was known to be very mischievious," he said. "On the set, all of a sudden we'd hear a loud pop. We'd look around and there was Alfalfa with his zipper down, relieving himself on the hot bank lights that lined the floor. He'd do it just to see the bulbs explode and watch the steam rise." Switzer later met with unfortunate fate and died tragically when he was shot to death in 1959; it was the result of a fracas with a business partner over a fifty-dollar reward for a lost dog. Spanky said "Alfalfa pulled a knife on his ex-partner."

Alfalfa's sweetheart, Darla Hood, found it difficult to secure work after she grew up, and died in 1979 "of a broken heart shortly after her husband's death," Spanky explained. Billie "Buckwheat" Thomas died in October 1980 and Billy Laughlin, aka "Froggy," the bespectacled "Rascal" with the deep "Popeye" voice, died in a motor scooter accident in the early 1950s.

Of them all, Spanky stayed in touch most with Matthew "Stymie" Beard, the little black kid with the clean-shaven head topped with a derby; they remained the best of friends until Beard died in 1981, the victim of a stroke. Throughout Beard's adult life, he was a heroin addict who landed in prison more than once. Reportedly, at the time of Beard's death, he had finally shaken the drug habit for a considerable period of time.

"When we were filming, Stymie could get me to do things the director couldn't" Spanky recalled. "I struck up a good friendship with him. Despite his problems, he was a nice guy."

Standouts from the Gang like Jackie Cooper and Robert Blake furthered their acting careers after the juvenile comedies, whereas most of the alumni succumbed to other interests in adulthood. Spanky described the last time he saw Robert Blake (aka Mickey Gubitosi), in 1980, at a reunion. "It had been 1943 since I last saw Mickey," he said. "I'm not comfortable calling him Robert and I told him so. I said, 'Hell, you're Mickey to me,' and he said, 'Oh you can call me anything you want, Spank.' He surprised me being there."

As for the other "Little Rascals," Spanky admitted, "I didn't really have many friends. The only time we hung around with each other was when we were shooting and when you're with somebody every day, all day, at the end of the week—enough's enough. We didn't live anywhere near each other. As kids, we didn't play together after shooting. It just didn't happen. I was kind of a loner and I always have been a loner."

When producer Hal Roach selected Spanky out of swarms of tikes, he didn't see a loner, but rather a genuine youngster with a sparkle in the eye. He was a natural in front of a camera. He chose real children—not actors—for his comedies. That was Roach's talent, Spanky pointed out. "Roach was smart," he said. "He picked the freckles and cute faces. He wanted us to be ourselves. Give us words and the characters would be themselves. That was the secret to 'Our Gang's' success.

"People say that some of our films were racist," Spanky furthered, "but I don't believe that one minute.

"Take the episode where the kids paint measles on their faces to play hooky. When they get to the black kid (Buckwheat), they put white dots on his face. That's funny, but not a racial slur. Think of it like this: In those days, everything was segregated, yet here we showed black and white kids in the same neighborhood, playing together and having a good time. In reality, it just wouldn't have happened in those days. You just wouldn't see it."

Spanky's span in films lasted a decade. "I got lucky," he said. "I was short in stature and stayed short. When other Gang members got too big, they left the film and were replaced."

At the age of 64, Spanky McFarland died of a sudden heart attack on the morning of June 30, 1993, at his home in Ft. Worth, Texas. His mother, Virginia, died just thirty days later.

Spanky's second wife, Doris, recently recounted the sudden loss. "He had high blood pressure," she said, "and in fact, he had an appointment with the doctor the next day.

"That morning, he had gotten up. I had stepped outside for a few minutes when I came back to check on him, I brought his coffee and so forth, as I always had. He was just laying there at the foot of the bed."

Expressions of condolence came in from all over the country, including a phone call from Europe with the King of Pop, singer Michael Jackson, crying on the other end. ■



Cinema Classics HORROR, CLASSICS and MORE!

ALL IN SP!



INNER SANCTUM DOUBLE FEATURES $11.95 Reg. $14.95

Starring LON CHANEY, JR

CALLING DR. DEATH & STRANGE CONFESSION

WEIRD WOMAN & FRDZEN GHDST

DEAD MAN'S EYES & PILLOW OF DEATH

$9.98

Andromeda Strain
Black Mama White Mama
Deadly Mantis
Die! Die! My Darling
Frightened City (S. Connery)
Flash Gordon (Sam Jones)
Flesh And Blood (R. Hauer)
The Fly (1986)
The Fury (K. Douglas)
Island Of Terror
It Came From Outer Space
Krull
Lair Of The White Worm
Last Starfighter
The Mole People
Monolith Monsters
Monster On The Campus
Near Dark (L. Henriksen)
Return Of The Dragon (B. Lee)
Rio Lobo (John Wayne)
Saint: Fiction Makers
Tarantula
Them!

LASER DISC & DVD AVAILABLE!!!

ALWAYS THE BEST PRINTS, PACKAGES & PRICING

$12.95 Reg. $14.98

Attack of the 50 Foot Woman
Big Bad Mama II *NEW*
Big Doll House (Pam Grier)
Blithe Spirit (Rex Harrison)
Caged Heat (Barbara Steele)
Candy Stripe Nurses *NEW*
Deathsport (David Carradine)
Eat My Dust (Ron Howard)
Frankenstein 1970 (B. Karloff)
Giant Behemoth
House On Haunted Hill (V. Price)
Invasion of the Bee Girls
1984 (Richard Burton)
Scanners
Seventh Veil (James Mason)
Sleeping Car To Trieste (J. Kent)
Species (Ltbx)
Poltergeist (Ltbx)
Queen Of Outer Space *NEW*
Raffles (Ronald Colman) *NEW*
Sssssss
Starship Invasions (Chris. Lee)
Thirst (David Hemmings)
World Without End *NEW*



$14.95

Alice Sweet Alice (Ltbx)
Dracula Prince/Darkness (Ltbx)
God Told Me To (Ltbx) *NEW*
Maniac (Ltbx)
Mark Of The Devil
Martin (Ltbx) *NEW*
Plague Of The Zombies (Ltbx)
Rasputin The Mad Monk (Ltbx)
The Reptile (Ltbx) *NEW*
Return Of The Blind Dead
Spider Baby (Ltbx) *NEW*
The Stepford Wives (Ltbx)
Tombs Of The Blind Dead



EXCLUSIVES!!! $19.98 each

Biggest Bundle Of Them All
Caretakers (Joan Crawford)
Dirty Dingus Magee (F. Sinatra)
Dream Wife (C. Grant/D. Kerr)
Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet
Five Miles To Midnight
Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight
Get Carter (Michael Caine)
A Kiss Before Dying (1956)
Mask Of Dimitrios (P. Lorre)
Night Must Fall (R. Russell)
Outrage (Paul Newman)
The Satan Bug (G. Maharis)
Seventh Dawn (Wm. Holden)
36 Hours (James Garner)
Valley Of The Kings (1954)

BUY ANY 2 AND GET A 3RD FOR ONLY $9.98
ONLY FROM CINEMA CLASSICS!

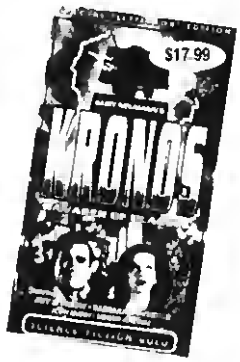
CLASSIC WESTERNS

$12.95 each (Reg. $14.95)

Blazing Across The Pecos ('48)
Bonanza Town (1951)
Duel At Silver Creek (1952)
Hangman's Knot (1952)
No Name On The Bullet (1959)
Terror In A Texas Town (1958)
Walk The Proud Land (1956)

CLASSIC SCI-FI $17.99 Reg. $19.98

Astounding She-Monster
Crawling Eye
Destination Moon
Devil Girl From Mars
Flight To Mars
The Flying Saucer
Invaders From Mars (original)
Kronos (Ltbx)
Phantom From Space
Project Moonbase
Rocketship X-M
Stranger From Venus
Target Earth



NOIR & CULT $17.99 Reg. $19.98

Bullet For Joey (E.G. Robinson)
Flareup (Raquel Welch) *NEW*
Gargoyles (1972) *NEW*
Greystoke: Legend Of Tarzan
Impact (Brian Donlevy) *NEW*
Kiss Me Deadly (w/ new footage)
Murder My Sweet (Dick Powell)
Pink Flamingos (25th Anniv.)
Quicksand (Mickey Rooney)
Reservoir Dogs (Ltbx) *NEW*
Saint (30's/40's) 4 volumes

Shipping: $4.75 for 1 tape, $6 for 2, $7 for 3, $8 for 4, $9 for 5 or more
AK, HI, PR, APO, FPO, Canada, $4.75 1st, $1.50 ea. additional
Europe & S. America $9, $4 ea. add'l, $11 1st, $5 ea. add'l elsewhere
We accept VISA, MASTERCARD and DISCOVER
Please use a street address - no PO boxes. *Sale ends 10/31/97*
Mail order and store hours: Mon-Sat 11:30am-7:30pm

Mail orders: **Cinema Classics Dept. C**
PO BOX 174 Village Station
New York, NY 10014
E-mail us at: **CClassics@aol.com**

Phone: **(212) 675-6692**
Fax: (212) 675-6594
Catalog $3 or FREE with any order

Visit our NEW YORK store at 33 BOND St., NYC

MARK PATRICK CARDUCCI
Nov 18, 1954 - June 18, 1997



Vampira (Maila Nurmi) and Mark Carducci, December 1991.

First, the laughs:

(Seeing Forry Ackerman's bust of James Arness as The Thing From Another World, which was sculpted with a rather haughty facial expression): "Do I look superior? It's because I am The Thing!"

(He hated air travel, and driving on Vineland Avenue in North Hollywood, underneath a plane about to land at Burbank Airport): "The miracle of flight I hate it."

(On his half Italian, half Irish heritage). "I like to eat *and* drink."

Any laughs ended and a lot of tears began on June 18, when screenwriter Mark Carducci took his own life in a San Fernando Valley motel room, at age 42. He leaves a widow, Teresa, and a one-year-old daughter, Alicea.

This is my second *Cult Movies* obit in nine months, but it was far easier to come up with facile poignancies when 87 year old Harry Thomas died last October, than it is to comment on the horrifying loss of someone in my own age group.

Mark hadn't had a script produced for a while but was active creatively. As recently as two weeks before his death, he was asking fellow screenwriter Scott Spiegel on how best to approach Sam Raimi on pitching a movie idea.

He did leave a note, the exact text of which I haven't seen, but basically he said that it wasn't anyone's fault, his decision entirely, and that he could no longer cope with the "demons" that tormented him. These weren't demons of the fictitious H.P. Lovecraft ilk, but apparently unresolved issues between Mark and his mother, who died last year. He had a complete nervous breakdown following her death, but all his friends thought that he had bounced back to his talkative, fantasy-art-loving self. I guess not.

Having lost my own mother to suicide in 1985, I probably handled the news better than the average person, but not much better. The "Bat Pack," the close-knit contingent of *Famous Monsters* kids who are a great help and comfort to Forry Ackerman in his old age, is devastated. Accustomed to living in pretend monster world, they have been plunged into heavy, silent grief. Mark, who we called "Carducula," had an attribute that is rare among visitors to Forry's: he was honest. He was also good-hearted and altruistic. After the Northridge earthquake in January 1994, he was over at Forry's the same morning, putting the jumbled artwork and knickknacks back in order. This is just one example.

In May 1991, Carducci hosted a *Plan 9* party at his North Hollywood home, on the date that Criswell had predicted that flying saucers would land on the White House lawn. He showed his laserdisc of the film, and served snacks and drinks. An Amateur videotape that a friend and I had shot of Tor Johnson's house and grave, and another made that night of Harry Thomas and Conrad Brooks talking about Ed Wood, gave Mark an idea. He asked me "Why don't we do a feature-length documentary on *Plan 9*?" I said "You're on!", paraphrased Criswell's narration for the "Flying Saucers over Hollywood" half of the title, with Mark contributing the "*Plan 9* Companion" subhead. He wrote the script, conducted the interviews, and got Wood-loving artist Drew Friedman to do the cover art for the video box. I chipped in on the writing, and did the narration on and off camera, but it was pretty much Mark's baby.

Some may accuse me of hypocrisy or revisionism in writing about Mark compassionately, because we fought like cats and dogs over the documentary's editing (it's too long) and marketing. As Tim Burton discovered, there simply is no money in the subject matter of Ed Wood, but there was an Oscar® for Martin Landau's portrayal of Lugosi. He was helped in his portrayal by being hand delivered a copy of "Flying Saucers Over Hollywood"; and the scene in *Ed Wood* with flying saucers with visible strings dangling over a miniature Hollywood sign does not appear in *Plan 9*. It was thought up by Mark for the opening title sequence of our documentary.

Mark Carducci started as a kid from Brooklyn, New York, tuning in WOR TV's zillion screenings of *King Kong*, and reading *Famous Monsters*; and like Ed Wood before him, wound up making his mark on Hollywood. At your video store, you can find *Buried Alive*, a made-for-TV movie that still airs frequently, in the B's with *Bride of the Monster*; *Pumpkinhead* in the P's with *Plan 9*; and his first film, of which he was eternally embarassed, *Neon Maniacs* in the N's with *Night of the Ghouls*. "Flying Saucers..." had its title changed to *The Ed Wood Story. The Plan 9 Companion* by its distributor.

It's hard to reconcile myself to writing about Mark Carducci in past tense (as this is written, it's only been four days). His permanent solution to what surely could have been a temporary problem will cause many sleepless nights for his family and friends. Try not to think badly of him, or that what he did was selfish—one of the tough aftermaths of suicide is to concede that the person really was that miserable.

Even with Mark at the center of our big *Plan 9* inside joke, I recall a little guiltily Ed Wood's purple prose: "Each of us on this Earth knows that there is a time to live, and a time to die...yet death is always a shock" (etc.) But maybe eventually, our memories of Mark will be confined to his enthusiastic, mile-a-minute talk about horror and sci-fi movies, books, and artwork—in the time that Criswell floridly described, and that poor Mark couldn't see for himself: "In the future..."

—Lee Harris

EUROTRASH VIDEOS FOR SALE

All films are dubbed in English

HORROR

The following titles are $20. Postage is $3 for 1 tape and $1.00 for each additional tape. Send $3 for a catalogue to **ETC, P.O. Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325**

ALIEN FROM THE DEEP-A MARGHERITI, C. NAPIER
ALL THE COLORS OF DARKNESS-S.MARTINO UNCUT
ARABELLA THE BLACK ANGEL-SLEAZY GIALLO
THE FOURTH VICTIM—CARROL BAKER
4 FLIES ON GREY VELVET-LETTERBOXED
SEVEN BLOOD STAINED ORCHIDS—U. LENZI
A CANDLE FOR THE DEVIL—JUDY GEESON
BABY BLDOD-FRENCH W/ENGLISH SUBS UNCUT!
BLOOD DELIRIUM- J.P. LAW & GORDON MITCHELL
BLOOD ROSE- HOWARD VERNON
BODY COUNT—R. DEODATO
BOY WHO KNEW TOO MUCH—DIR. GUIDO ZURLI
CANNIBAL MAN—ELOY DE LA IGLESIAS UNCUT
CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST-R.DEODATO
CASTLE OF THE CREEPING FLESH—HOWARD VERNON,
CY WARRIOR- HENRY SILVA ROBOCOP RIPOFF
DEATH KNOCKS TWICE— URSULA ANDRESS
DEATH IN HAITI—A. STEFFEN, ANITA STRINDBERG
DEATH LAID AN EGG—G. QUESTI,GINA LOLLABRIGIDA
DEATH STEPS IN THE DARK-SUSAN SCOTT
DEEP RED-UNCUT, SUBTITLED AND LETTERBOXED!
DELIRIUM—M. HARGITAY
DELIRIUM-L. BAVA SERENA GRANDI
THE DEVIL'S EXORCIST-JACK TAYLOR
DEVIL WITHIN HER—UNCUT BEYOND THE DOOR
DINNER WITH A VAMPIRE-L. BAVA
DON'T TORTURE THE DUCKLING—FULCI,
ETOILE—JENNIFER CONNELLY
EVIL SENSES—MONICA GUERTORRE
EYE IN THE LABYRINTH-GIALLO BY CAIANO
FACELESS-CAROLINE MUNROE, BRIGITTE LAHAIE J.FRANCO
FORBIDDEN PHOTOS OF A LADY—DAGMAR LASSANDER
BLACK MAGIC RITES-M. HARGITAY, IN ITALIAN ONLY
HITCH-HIKER-F. NERO CORINNE CLERY DAVID HESS
ICEBOX MURDERS—JACK TAYLOR, MIRTA MILLER
KNIFE OF ICE—CARROL BAKER
LADY IN RED KILLS 7 TIMES—B. BOUCHET
LORNA THE EXORCIST-IN FRENCH FRANCO
MALPERTUIS—ORSON WELLES
MANIAC KILLER-C.CONNERS, R. GINTY
THE MONK-FRANCO NERO
MOUNTAIN OF THE CANNIBAL GODS—U. ANDRESS
MURDER IN PARIS—ROSALBA NERI
NIGHT OF THE SORCORERS-UNCUT DE OSSORIO
NIGHT TRAIN MURDERS—DIR. ALDO LADO
ONE ON TOP OF ANOTHER—LUCIO FULCI,
PAGANINI HORROR-L. COZZI
PERVERSION STORY—BRETT HALSEY
PYJAMA GIRL CASE—DALILA DI LAZZARO
QUEENS OF EVIL—EVELYNE STEWART, RAY LOVELOCK
REFLECTIONS IN BLACK—DAGMAR LASSANDER
RING OF DARKNESS-M. MELL
SADIST OF NOTRE DAME —JESUS FRANCO
SCARAB—RIP TORN
SHADOWS UNSEEN—DIR. CAMILLO BAZZONI
THE GHOSTS OF SODOM-FULCI!
SO SWEET SO PERVERSE—CARROL BAKER,ERIKA BLANC
SOMETHING'S CREEPING IN THE DARK—LUCIA BOSE
SPASMO—U. LENZI
SWEET BODY OF DEBORAH—C. BAKER
TERROR TRAIN—DIR F. BALDI, SILVIA DIONISIO
THE MAN WITH THE ICY EYES—BARBARA BOUCHET
THE KILLER RESERVED 9 SEATS—JANET AGREN,
THE CASE OF THE SCORPION'S TAIL—S. MARTINO
THE CORRUPTION OF CHRIS MILLER—JEAN SEBERG
WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO OUR DAUGHTERS?- DALLAMANO
WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO SOLANGE?—C. KEATON
THE DOUBLE—EWA AULIN
THE PERFUME OF A LADY IN BLACK—MIMSY FARMER
UNTIL DEATH-L. BAVA
VAMPIRE IN VENICE- KLAUS KINSKI!
WAX MASK-ARGENTO/STIVALETTI's NEWEST!
ZOMBIE 3-FULCI/MATTEI

The following titles are $15

TWO FACES OF TERROR—LUCIANA PALUZZI
AENIGMA—L. FULCI
AFTER DEATH—CLAUDIO FRAGASSO
APPOINTMENT IN BLACK—A. BONIFACIO
BLUE CHILL—DALIA DI LAZZARO
BREAKFAST AT MANCHESTER MORGUE—DIR. J. GRAU
CAT O' 9 TAILS—ARGENTO
CLOCKWORK TERROR—SUE LYON
COLLEGE GIRL MURDERS—EDGAR WALLACE ADAPTATION
CRIMES OF THE BLACK CAT—S. KOSCINA
CURSE OF THE VAMPIRE-SPANISH MADE BLOODSUCKERS
CYBER EDEN—CHRIS LEE
DAMNED IN VENICE—DIR U. LIBERATORE
DEADLY TRIANGLE—ERIKA BLANC
DEVIL'S HONEY—L. FULCI
DISTANT LIGHTS—TOMAS MILIAN
DRAGON FLY FOR EACK CORPSE—PAUL NASCHY
ENCOUNTERS IN THE DEEP—DIR. TONINO RICCI
EROTIC RITES OF FRANKENSTEIN—J. FRANCO
EVIL FINGERS—DIR L. BAZZONI, FRANCO NERO
FLESH OF THE ORCHID—CHARLOTTE RAMPLING
FOXY LADY—DEBORA CAPRIGLIOLI
GREAT WHITE—JAWS RIPOFF
HORRIBLE SEXY VAMPIRE—DIR JOSE MADRID
HOUSE OF CLOCKS—LUCIO FULCI
HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY—L. FULCI
HUMAN ANIMALS—WEIRD SF
IN THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE—ROSANNA YANI
ISLAND OF DEATH—DIR. N. MASTROKIS
JEKYLL AND HYDE PORTFOLIO—US MADE LIKE A ANDY MILLIGAN FILM!
KILLER WORE GLOVES—DIR. JUAN BOSCH
KILLER CROCODILE
KILLER CROCODILE 2
MURDER CLINIC—WILLIAM BERGER
MUTANT ACTION-ALEX DE LA IGLESIAS
NIGHT OF THE WALKING DEAD—DIR L. KLIMOVSKY,
POSSESSION—125 MINUTE VERSION
ROBOWAR-BRUNO MATTEI
SEXY CAT—JUAN PEREZ TABERNERO
SHOCK TREATMENT—ALAIN DELON
SIMONETTI HORROR PROJECT—MUSIC VIDEO
SO SWEET SO DEAD aka THE SLASHER IS A SEX MANIAC—UNCUT
SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN—DANISH VAMPIRE COMEDY
SPIDER'S LABIRINTH—SUPERNATURAL—DIR. E. MARTINO
SWAMP OF THE RAVENS—DIR. MANUEL CANO
SWEET HOUSE OF HORRORS—L. FULCI
TENEBRAE—ARGENTO
THE HEAT OF THE FLAME—DIR. R. MARCHENT
THE WASHING MACHINE-NEW HORROR BY DEODATO
WEEKEND MURDERS—ORCHIDEA DE SANTIS

Liz Renay Speaks!!!!!



Interview by Titus Moody

Liz Renay is one of the great beauties of the silver screen, and her popularity is seemingly immortal. Her book, *My Face For The World To See* was a best seller for years, and her performance in John Waters' film, *Desperate Living*, has made that a classic of cult cinema. Our roving reporter, Titus Moody, traveled to Las Vegas where he interviewed Liz Renay in her lovely, spacious home. Here's what they had to say.

Cult Movies: Tell us how you got into show business

Liz Renay: The first thing I ever did was to work for Ilene Ford as a fashion model in New York City. Someone sent my picture into a Marilyn Monroe look-alike contest at 20th Century Fox. Steve Allen was one of the judges. I won the contest which got me a screen-test at Fox, and got me lots more modeling jobs. It also got me out to Hollywood, and out for a trip to Warner Brothers studios, since I wanted to see how movies were made. A director grabbed me and screamed, "Jessica!" And I said, "I'm not an actress! I don't even have a Screen Actors' Guild card!" So he had somebody go to the union and get me a card and that's how I started on the *Sugarfoot* TV series with Will Hutchins.

They put me in an acting class along with Natalie Wood. I got driven around by Tab Hunter, since I didn't have a car. As a result of that Monroe contest I did get to meet Marilyn Monroe. She was so nice to me! It turned out we were the same age and she was already a big star in films...

CM: But you were no competition to her at the time were you?

LR: Oh, of course not. They were doing these contests all the time to find new talent. They had a Betty Grable look-alike contest and everybody entered that.

CM: And you started dancing in the clubs about that time?

LR: Yeah, I worked everywhere! I'd work as a high fashion model by day, then dash over to theaters and clubs and be moonlighting as a dancer. And that dancing got me into a number of other acting jobs. In fact, it turned up in the last film I did before moving here to Las Vegas and retiring from the movies. It was a picture called *Peepers*, for 20th Century Fox, with Michael Caine and Natalie Wood. And what did I play in that one? A burlesque queen! It was supposed to be a 1930s piece and I had to twirl my boobs with big tassels on them, which was a bit different from what I'd been doing, but I learned how to twirl them by bending over and swing them as I came back up again.

You know, my burlesque dancing was something I always wanted to kind of keep in the closet. I'd go out of town with my dancing because I wanted to be known in Hollywood as an actress, not a dancer. But some producer would see me or hear about my show and it ended up getting me more work. Everything I've done has kind of happened by accident that way.

CM: Didn't you do some big clubs in Hollywood?

LR: I worked at the Largo with Candy Barr. Also at the Ivar Theater. The Largo was Dean Martin's club. I also worked in some plays here in town. I did Scuba Duba in Hollywood and also in San Francisco. I don't like plays so much because of the repetition. One time we did a three-person with my daughter Brenda and an actor named Tony Diamond. About a guy in a mother/daughter affair. And we got so sick of that play that one night we skipped the whole second act. It got over in sixty minutes instead of ninety, but nobody really knew they'd missed anything.

But plays aren't my cup of tea. I like variety in all things. If I had to do one play for a solid year I'd go bananas. You can give the performance of your life on stage and maybe only five or six hundred people will see it, then it's gone forever. I like film because you hopefully give a good performance and we can see it years later. It's not as stressful, since you memorize a few lines at a time; if you flub a line the director cuts and you do it over. I've never had to memorize a movie script. They change the lines all the time anyway. Then if you work for some director like Ray Dennis Steckler, there isn't any script! We make it up as we go along!

CM: You were also good in that John Waters film.

LR: Ah, Titus! At the risk of sounding braggadocious, I must say that I also thought I was good in that John Waters film. He's a director who really knows what he wants. In that mink coat scene where he has me getting all these presents, I'm grabbing everything, going "What else! A mink coat? Oooo, what else!" Now that was a scene that I didn't think would work at all, but when I saw it on the screen it worked great. Every now and then I watch that again on video.

CM: You remember being involved with gangsters at times?

LR: How in the world could I ever forget?!?

CM: I saw you on a talk show a while back and you said that was a lot of excitement.

LR: Absolutely! Floating crap games in Brooklyn, and being where angels fear to tread, being with the top gangsters in the country, called Murder Inc., the ones that carried out the executions for the Mafia. To a girl in her 20s who'd never been around, had a religious upbringing, this seemed like high excitement to me. I never knew I would

get my tit in the wringer that far, never dreamed I'd spend three years of my life in a federal prison over all this.

CM: Was it three years?

LR: I served 27 months due to good behavior. I was teaching art classes and little theater to the other inmates.

CM: Is that where you started painting?

LR: I started long before that, but I did 150 paintings while I was in prison. I'll tell you how I felt about it. They said, "We're giving you three years!" And I felt, okay give me three years, you can support me and I'll paint as many paintings as I can, I will write my book, I will do everything to let you give me this three years rather than taking it away from me. So I did more in that three years in there than I ever did in any other three-year period of my life.

I wrote a book in there that I immediately got a $75,000 advance on from Bantam books. Lyle Stuard did the hardback edition. I ended up living on that book for ten years, I thought it would never end. It came out in a French translation and that was also a best seller. I did that all in Terminal Island.

CM: Didn't Candy Barr go to jail too?

LR: She served time, but not with me. Hers was state, whereas mine was federal. She got 15 years for having a marijuana cigarette in her bra. I got three years for telling a little white lie that would have resulted in a slap on the wrist had I had no prior record, had I not been associated with gangsters.

CM: Remember when we went to the hospital at UCLA to see Mickey Cohen?

LR: Yes. He'd always been such a natty dresser, and even in the hospital when he was about to die he'd be in there combing his hair and trying to look his best.

CM: Remember how he used to tip everybody a hundred dollars?

LR: Yes, he threw the money around pretty good. But some of the others I knew threw it around a lot better. He was small potatoes for giving out money compared to the Anastasia group.

CM: So now you've retired here to Las Vegas; what have you been doing lately?



Liz Renay has Titus Moody hanging on every word.

LR: Well, I keep busy! I have six books out at the time and I still love to write. I've continued with my painting and I'll have a gallery showing in New York soon. My first love is still acting, and I've written five movie scripts that I'd like to have produced and appear in. One is a film where I appear as a psychopathic killer.

And I like to go out and gamble. I'm always ahead of the game. I kept a tally on one occasion of subtracting all my losses from my wins and I came out $12,000 ahead.

CM: That's quite interesting, because most people lose.

R: Not always, as long as you limit your losses nd don't limit your wins. Like if you know you're ahead and can put the money you came with back in your pocket, and just go for broke with your winnings, you're okay. If you limit your losses to a small amount and say, "If I lose this much I'm quitting!" well, you usually can stay ahead of the game.

CM: And what are these dolls you're making?

LR: I make these X-rated girl dolls. I make them with their own boobies and their own little pink nipples. I put my tag that says, "Made for you with tender loving care," over the crotch area, with little panties over that. The only thing they wear besides a breakaway dress is little panties over the crotch. I just sent one to my publishers' wife, and they loved it! So far I just give them to very dear friends, but I suppose I could market them.

CM: You sure do keep active!

LR: I've always tried to keep busy. Life is wonderful, there's so much to do, and I can't find enough hours in the day to do all I wish to do. Mummies resting in their tombs make no mistakes. So I consider my mistakes a barometer of how much I'm doing. If I'm doing a lot, I may make a lot of errors, but I don't care because I'll be doing as many creative things as I can. To me that's what a good life should be all about ■



Liz Renay (left) in the early '70s with Mayan Theater owner Carlos Tobalina and friends

The Last Bride of Dracula

Hope Lugosi 1919-1997

by Gregory William Mank



Bela leads a smiling Hope into the office to get a marriage license in 1955.

In July of 1993, my friend Charles Heard (with whom I was working on the Carroll Borland book, *Countess Dracula*) called me with a surprise. Just the evening before, he'd talked on the telephone with Hope Lugosi—Bela's fifth, final, notorious wife.

"Would you like to call her?" asked Charles.

I wasn't sure. After all, I'd accepted (and, in my book *Karloff and Lugosi*, reported) the Hope Lugosi legend that had become part of Bela's growing folklore: Hope, the crazy, blonde fan/vamp, who adored Lugosi since seeing Dracula when she was 12 years old . . . the self-proclaimed witch, who dreamed and schemed obsessively for 25 years to become Mrs. Bela Lugosi—the last Bride of Dracula.

She was the young, macabre femme fatale who sank her nails into a lonely, forlorn, 72-year-old Bela as he left Metropolitan State Hospital after his drug addiction purging, marrying him only two weeks later; the bride/harpy who sadistically added to the woes and torments of Bela's final year; the widow who had vowed to "forget all about having been Mrs. Bela Lugosi," supposedly giving away "all" her memorabilia, avoiding all interviews, and keeping a bitter exile.

37 years after Bela's death, she was still Mrs. Bela Lugosi, having fled the west coast many years before to go to Hawaii—and work at the leper hospital on Molokai.

Frankly, her reputation scared me. I remembered my 1988 interview with Chuck Moses, former film executive for Howard W. Koch, producer of Lugosi's *The Black Sleep*. In the Summer of 1956, Chuck had gone to San Francisco to supervise *The Black Sleep*'s personal appearance tour with cast members Lon Chaney, John Carradine, Tor Johnson, and Lugosi. (Vampira, not in the picture, joined the tour later.) As we began talking, Chuck asked me if Mrs. Lugosi was still alive. When I replied she was, he forbade me to print the punchline of his anecdote, fearing the redoubtable widow might sue me and him.

Chuck Moses had arrived at San Francisco's St. Francis Hotel, where the actors had stayed the previous night. There he found not only a drunken Carradine, by an "extremely nervous" Tor Johnson, who met Chuck in the lobby. The giant actor/wrestler was terrified by the severity of the drinking by his hotel roommate, Bela, who, as Johnson told Chuck, "was running around the walls" of the hotel room. The aged actor was cured of his drug addiction, but tragically still addicted to alcohol.

Tor Johnson confided to Chuck that he had put in an emergency call to Hope in Hollywood, Tor asking what he should do if an intoxicated Bela once again began careening around the room, literally running into the walls high in the St. Francis Hotel. Hope's response shocked Tor—and still gave Chuck Moses chills over 30 years later: "Open the window."

Less than two months later, Bela Lugosi was dead—not in a fall from a window, but from a heart attack. He had died peacefully in bed at his Hollywood apartment, and was buried at Holy Cross Cemetery—in his Dracula cape.

His legend would grow. And so would the legend of Hope Lugosi—as the virtual lady vampire who had lured, agonized and buried Hollywood's Dracula.

Did I really want to talk to this woman?

Well, curiosity kills cats and journalists. I made the call.

I was never in the first-floor, front apartment at 5620 Harold Way in Hollywood, where Mr. and Mrs. Bela Lugosi spent their single year of marriage. And I can't fairly say what happened behind the closed doors, who victimized who.

But I can say this: Hope Lugosi was great to me.

By the time I'd completed two long, candid, sometimes hilarious and sometimes horrifying telephone interviews with her, we were friends. We stayed friends. Over the last three years, every holiday saw cards from Hope—the envelopes elaborately decorated with stickers, the cards invariably containing delightful letters with maverick opinions on everything, and everybody.



Hope and Bela toast their nuptials on August 24, 1955

She had a salty, incredibly caustic sense of humor. But also, beneath the cynicism and the bombast, behind the Don Rickles-style timing and delivery, she had a kindness and sensitivity. She was deeply appreciative to have friends late in her life.

And despite all the melodrama of her final marriage, she was proud to have been Mrs. Bela Lugosi.

Hope Linginger was born in Johnstown, Pennsylvania March 23, 1919. When she married the 72-year-old Lugosi in 1955, she was 36, she told the papers she was 39, feeling it was less embarrassing to her bridegroom to be marrying a woman exactly half his age.

She grew up with a fascination for the fantastic, amidst the "Hex" signs of the Pennsylvania countryside. Hope adored black cats and bats, and would enjoy (for many years) telling people she was a witch. Naturally, she loved Halloween, her favorite holiday. Her All Hallow's Eve cards were always a treat, and she told me.

I do recall wonderful Halloween parties at home. My mother's birthday was October 29 and she always cooked up a party. We'd all sit in the dark and shiver as she told marvelous scary tales and passed around peeled grapes as the victim's eyeballs. Once, in my black cat suit, I had water poured on me by a farmer and, worse, caught my tail in the fence and thereby lost the most essential part of my costume. Good fun!

At age 12, she saw the movie *Dracula*. True to her legend, she was a passionate Lugosi fan from then on, dreaming of marrying him. She first saw Bela "in the flesh" in New York—probably in Ed Sullivan's *Stardust Cavalcade* stage show, which played Broadway's Loew's State Theatre in April, 1940.

"Oh, I was thrilled!" Hope told me. "I went three times. I went without dinner so I could afford to go."

Hope came to Hollywood. In 1942, she began working for RKO Studios as a continuity writer (i.e., preparing a complete script of each film, with music cued, lengths of scenes measured, etc., to be filed with each film's negative). In Hollywood, she met the still-dashing, cigar-smoking Bela two more times: at the Music Box Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard, after a performance of *Arsenic and Old Lace* in late summer, 1943; and at RKO, during the shooting of *The Body Snatcher*, in the Fall of 1944.

"He and Karloff were there," said Hope, "and I could go on the set."

While Hope followed Bela's life and career, she didn't "save herself" for her idol. In fact, contrary to the legend, she actually married twice before her union with Lugosi. She never discussed husband #1 with me, but listening to Hope remembering husband #2 was an experience:

That second one, Jose, was the best man in the world. Just wonderful. He had that old world charm—South American, Colombian. How did I know he had a wife curled away somewhere in Cuba? I knew it was illegal for us to marry, but I didn't care. But he made a bad mistake—he gave me up for Lent. Nobody gives me up for Lent! *Nobody*! I handed him his guitar, and said goodbye.

So he went out and drowned himself! I know he didn't do it on purpose, because he was a devout Catholic, and the horror of his life was to die without a priest. Well, no priest went down with him to the bottom of Clare Lake, I'm quite sure of it!

Living and working in Hollywood, Hope had observed many famous stars and personalities. Of course, she had her opinions of them.

Marilyn Monroe: She lived for a while in the orphanage right below where I lived. She was put there because nobody could stand her! Her mother went to the loony bin, and her aunt had worked with us at RKO as a negative cutter. The aunt'd had it with her! Everybody called Monroe Norma Jean, and she was so damned jealous! She just couldn't stand anyone who might be better-looking than she was! Ech! She had something that titillated audiences—that "come hither" look. It certainly wasn't brains!

Cary Grant: One day I was wearing a pale blue skirt and a pink angora sweater, and I thought I looked pretty hot! Grant came by and said, "You look just like an ice cream cone." I don't care what they say about him... he was as straight as an arrow. The boys in the cutting room would have told me if he weren't: they knew who was who in the zoo!

Vincent Price: I went to Vincent Price's home—not with Lugosi, but with my second husband,

(continued)

Hail to the Jack



Press luncheon for The Black Sleep *at the Tail o' the Cock restaurant in Los Angeles in 1956. Photo courtesy of Ken Schacter*

Jose... I was staring at one of the paintings—he painted, Price—and I stared at it, and I thought, "What the hell is that?" And Price said, "Well, turn it upside down, maybe it will look better." So I turned it around and I didn't see any difference—it looked horrible one way or the other!

Also, at RKO, Hope came to know producer Val Lewton, whose horror unit created such melodramas as *Cat People, I Walked With A Zombie, The Seventh Victim, The Curse of the Cat People*, and the Karloff & Lugosi *The Body Snatcher*.

The funniest part was Lewton and Robert Wise and the men who did the horror films—they were funny. By God, they had everybody laughing—everything was hysterically funny! The men who did the comedies—they walked around like mortuary attendants. Couldn't get a smile out of them. It was really weird!

I scared the hell out of the horror crowd one night. they were up in the projection room and I was horsing around down in editorial, and we'd been invited to a party. Well, we had privileges of borrowing whatever dress we wanted from the wardrobe department. Midriffs were all the rage, and I had one all lined up. That was fine, except that I'd broken a rib, and I'd had it taped. . .

So I went to head of shipping for film, and I said, "Charlie, I've got to get rid of this thing, it's not going to look very nice with my two-piece dress." "Oh sure," said Charlie, "just hang onto the desk and I'll give a good pull." "Well he pulled all right—not only the tape came off, but half of my hide! All around the middle! That was the end of the party, the dress and everything else, and I let out a scream that lifted Lewton and those men up above in the projection room right out of their seats!

Of course, Hope's most fascinating stories concerned her one-year marriage to Bela Lugosi.

"My body grew hot, then cold. I tried to eat the bed sheets, my pajamas," said Bela—describing his horrors as a drug addict. In April of 1955, Bela, divorced from Lillian, out of money, suffering the terrors of his addiction, committed himself to Metropolitan State Hospital in Norwalk, California. Documentation of this event is heartbreaking. The pictures of a 125 lb. Bela, so sadly desperate for attention that he posed for the press in a hospital sackcloth, showing the needle marks on his skeletal legs, is Hollywood Gothic at its most chilling.

Hope now made her move. She wrote to him constantly, offering encouragement ("There was a method to my madness!" she admitted). Bela was released August 5, 1955; at Bela's invitation, she went to visit him.

"I had to get him, now or never!" she told me.

Bela and Hope were married the night of Wednesday, August 24, 1955. The nuptials took place at the home of Dr. Manly P. Hall, metaphysics writer/lecturer, who had supposedly hypnotized Bela as a publicity stunt on Universal's 1940 Karloff/ Lugosi opus, *Black Friday*. 17-year old Bela Jr., was Best Man.

In 1993, Hope had no romantic illusions about the wedding—nor about Bela's last-minute reluctance to marry her.

I had a friend, Pat Delaney, my matron of honor, a big, tough Irish woman. She was ugly as a mud fence—but boy, she could keep Lugosi in line! Yes, indeed. She came to pick him up for the wedding. By this time he'd been drinking, and enough that he's having a little misgivings.

Pat said, "No you're not—*get dressed*!"

She got him dressed (to her husband's horror); she hustled Lugosi up to Manly Hall's house, and said, "He's not going to stand up a friend of mine, with all this publicity and all! No, no!" So we got married. We had a glass of champagne, he probably had a bottleful, I don't remember...



Cast photo from the film The Black Sleep

So began Bela Lugosi's fifth marriage, and Hope Lininger's third. The chauffeur for their honeymoon was Ed Wood himself—who already had directed Bela in the infamous *Glen or Glenda?* (1953) and *Bride of the Monster* (1955). *Plan Nine from Outer Space* was looming in both men's futures.) The newlyweds were the first tenants of the brand new apartment house at 5620 Harold Way, in the heart of Hollywood. Hope kept working at RKO; Bela faced an ill-fated comeback, and the demons that haunted him during his last year

Some people have claimed that one of the chief demons was Hope. She, in turn, had to cope with Bela's severe jealousy:

He was jealous like hell because I was at the studio all day...I never dared take a ride home with any of the men who were going my way, because if he ever found out, he'd raise holy hell... very jealous man. I don't know why—I wasn't *that* gorgeous!

Bela's heavy drinking, too, was a terrible problem. Yet Hope kept many happy memories. For example, she warmly remembered the night that Bela, she and Richard Sheffield (Bela's loyal young fan, and ringleader of the teenaged boys Hope affectionately called "the fan club"), visited Bela's former houses: the red-brick castle at 283S Westshire Drive, high on a cliff below the HOLLYWOODLAND sign; the colonial mansion at 2227 Outpost Drive, in the Hollywood Hills; and Bela's "Dracula House" at 10841 Whipple Street in North Hollywood—complete with steeple, pond and banana trees. Bela had shared all the homes with his fourth wife Lillian, but Hope went along on the pilgrimage with no rancor:

That was a most enjoyable evening! The house in North Hollywood was very interesting—it had all his original furniture in it. Big heavy piano, big heavy staircase. And one of the houses in the Hollywood Hills had a fireplace—you could burn up six bodies in there at once—that fascinated me! They had his dining room set there; evidently he sold it with the furniture, because the furniture had been custom-made.

Oh, the people were delighted to see us! Even in the pitch dark. "Sure! Come on in!" Lugosi didn't have to say much—everybody looked at him and they knew who he was! Sure! Then he announced he'd lived there. He was very, very affable that evening. We had a good time!

Then there were nights at the Little Gypsy Restaurant, out on the Sunset Strip. ("Now they're Girlie houses," lamented Hope of the "lovely" restaurants and clubs that used to be on the Strip. "You wouldn't believe how nice it was.")

We had a good time going to the Little Gypsy Restaurant, because they had real Hungarian Gypsies playing. And that was fun! I liked that—up to a point. You know how Hungarian music is. It starts out, "Oh, Whoop-de-Dee," and then it gets sadder and sadder and *sadder*—and everybody's finally crying.

Would Bela cry? Oh, my God! Does a cat have whiskers? Certainly! Especially while everyone was drinking all the time...

Once, Bela decided he was going to buy wine for the whole orchestra. And since I bought, I thought, "God—I'm buying for everyone, I'll buy one for me!" I took my bottle home with me, a Hungarian wine called "The Blood of the Bull," and polished it off there, where I could fall over, you know. The next morning, I felt just marvelous—trouble was, I couldn't move! Lugosi said "Wouldn't you like to fix breakfast?" I said, "Fix it

(continued)



Hope Lininger

yourself!" And I think he understood!

Of course, Hope came to know Bela's friends and co-workers such as Ed Wood:

I remember Eddie and his wife having a big fight one time, and she threw hot coffee in his face! As for Eddie being a transvestite... well, he stole one of my nightgowns once! Maybe Bela gave it to him, or maybe I had it drying in the bathroom or something (Ed would never go through the drawers)—but it vanished! I never got it back. After Eddie'd had it, I didn't want it back! But I guarantee you—Ed was always a perfect gentleman around me.

And there was bald, giant Tor Johnson:

Tor Johnson would bring his wife over ..I trembled when he sat on my velvet chairs, because he was so damn big! So I made him sit on something else, rather than have him break the legs on the chair!

Then there were the trips to the movies—Bela, Hope, Dick Sheffield, and "the fan club"—including an eventful return visit to see Universal's 1934 "KARLOFF and Bela LUGOSI" classic, *The Black Cat*:

Oh, Lugosi liked to go to the Movies—especially his own pictures. Once we went to a downtown theater (L.A. was safe in those days) to see *The Black Cat*. Oh yeah, he loved *The Black Cat*! I think that was his favorite film—he was very good-looking in it. Very. Well, right in the middle, while we're looking at *The Black Cat* all over again, Lugosi *screams* out, so everybody can turn around and see who he is—"OH, WHAT A HANDSOME BASTARD I WAS!"

Yeah, he just loved it! I'd rarely go to the movies with him anymore—I made the boys take him. It was embarrassing!

Meanwhile, Bela made a new movie. *The Black Sleep*. Basil Rathbone as a mad doctor, Lon Chaney as a bestial goon, John Carradine as a madman in a long gray beard ("Kill the infidels!")—and Bela as a mute servant. (The late Reginald LeBorg, director of *The Black Sleep*, remembered that Bela pleaded for dialogue, even though his role was written as mute). Hope visited the set—and was hardly impressed:

The Black Sleep—yeah, that farce. A terrible thing! I went over on the set once, and that was enough. I mean, a scruffy little studio, one of those fly-by-night things. Lon Chaney—I wonder if he was sober enough to stand up! He had big problems. And Carradine (an ugly-looking mutt)...they all drank like thirsty fish.

I don't think Lugosi really cared about having a non-speaking part. I really don't—he got a thousand dollars for it.

Hope came to know Bela's passionate dislikes, such as cats ("He hated cats!"), Boris Karloff ("He loathed Karloff!") and the Gabor sisters ("He said they were three tramps!"). But she also saw his



The photo of Bela that Hope carried in her wallet

Old World charm, his kindness to autograph seekers, his charm to her friends:

With the women, he was very "gal-lant." My girlfriends just adored him, because—oh, God! They got their hands kissed—he was all sweetness and light. When he wasn't drinking, he was very nice. And when he was with my friends, he was always nice, drunk or sober. Always.

"I don't think I ever saw Lugosi when he wasn't acting," said Hope. "I think it was just ingrained in him. And all actors play the same role. They're the world's greatest." There were other serious, traumatic complexities in the marriage. (For Hope's complete perspective, watch for *Lugosi's Last Days*, a forthcoming definitive book by Bela's friend, Richard Sheffield and Lugosi scholar *extraordinaire*, Gary Don Rhodes.)

Summer, 1956, the first anniversary neared. There was the disastrous *The Black Sleep* personal appearance tour. Hope, Bela and Richard Sheffield attended their last movie together—*Moby Dick*, at the Hollywood Pantages. ("Lugosi, hated it," said Hope. "I think he resented seeing youthful Gregory Peck. I really do."). Ed Wood was shooting parts of what he would unleash upon the world in 1959 as *Plan Nine from Outer Space*, with some of Lugosi's footage (as the mute "Ghoul Man") reportedly filmed only days before his death. And, only nights before his death, Lugosi awoke in the middle of the night (after heavy drinking) and announced to Hope that Karloff was in the next room.

He was profoundly frightened of death. And, as Hope learned much later, Lugosi had a secret: he was planning to divorce Hope, and sign a new will (cutting her from his inheritance) on Friday, August 17, 1956.

"Fate intervened, as it always does for me," said Hope; Bela Lugosi died the evening of August 16, 1956.

It was Thursday night—I got paid on Thursdays—and I got home, with all the damn yogurt and canned papaya (God, he loved canned papaya!). I was putting everything away, and I was debating with myself (I knew he was in the bedroom)—should I put the fish on or not?

Well, I went in the bedroom. He was stretched out on the bed, and he looked funny. I thought, "I wonder if he's dead?" and I patted him all over—he seemed to be all nice and toasty warm. He must have just died. Death never bothers me. I've had so many people around me die that it didn't bother me, but I wanted to make damn sure before I called somebody. If I got people in there, and he wasn't really dead—just drunk—he'd be mad as a hornet!

So I asked the woman next door. "No, God, no!"—she didn't want to look at anything that might be dead. So I went up and got the landlord—he didn't mind looking at the dead things. So he came down and said, "Yeah, I think so."

Bela Lugosi had died around 6:45 P.M. of a coronary occlusion. He was 73 years old. Hope found the Count Dracula of her fantasies on the



Hope Lugosi, circa 1995



Hope Lugosi in Hollywood, April 1956

bed, in his underwear, and hardly in a state befitting an icon. For all her irreverence about her famous husband, Hope was very sensitive about how Bela Lugosi would be seen by the authorities:

I said to the landlord, "Well, let's put the liquor bottles away, shall we, before we call the police or anybody."

Hope met with the detectives, the morticians and the coroner's staff before going to spend the night at a girlfriend's, so to escape the press. She totally refuted the legend that Lugosi died while reading Ed wood's script *The Final Curtain*. ("Oh, that's a lot of feathers! The only thing he had anywhere near him was a bottle.")

The Strother Chapel of old Utter-McKinley Mortuary, 6240 Hollywood Boulevard, hosted the funeral rites. (The building later became a theater, and just recently was torn down to accommodate the subway.) The mortician was a crony of Bela's, and Hope had expected special treatment. "Yeah, sure!" she sarcastically recalled. Her friend Phyllis had to loan her the money for the coffin.

Lugosi and I'd had dinner a couple times with his friend at the mortuary. I wasn't too thrilled eating a meal with a couple of stiffs stretched out on the floor below. As things turned out, I wished that mortician had been one of them.

The funeral—"a very weird funeral," in Hope's words—took place Saturday afternoon, August 18, 1956. Hope had vivid memories of the problems getting a priest for the Catholic rites ("For a time, no priest would come! Lugosi had been married five times! *Please!*"), the Hungarian violinist; the mourning Tor Johnson ("He blubbered like it was going out of style"); and the pictures taken of the body, adorned in Dracula cape and costume:

They were taking pictures right and left of Lugosi in the casket. I don't have one to this day; don't ask me where they all disappeared. I know I gave one to Pat Delaney. She sent it to her son, who was stationed in Germany, and when he opened the envelope, he almost dropped dead!

Bela Lugosi was buried in Holy Cross Cemetery, in Culver City, right next to Dixie Lee, Bing Crosby's first wife (Crosby has since joined them.) Bela's ex-wife Lillian paid for the grave site and funeral service. Hope shared the tiny estate—totaling about $2,900.00 with Bela Jr. "Life went on," said Hope.

Hope never remarried. contrary to legend, she did not give away all of Bela's belongings to a famous collector(s); however, a full account of what Hope saved, sold and gave away would require more space than is available here.

In 1957, Hope gave an interview to the *National Inquirer*. "Afraid of him? He was afraid of me!" said Hope, hamming it up for the reporter, claiming she was a witch and mocking her late husband. Once again, there was apparent method in her madness. It was her way of scaring off the curious; her way of hiding the hurt she had suffered in her year with this moody, tempestuous, deeply unhappy man.

She avoided publicity. She worked in Los Angeles and San Francisco. In 1976, Robert Cremer's book *Lugosi; the Man Behind the Cape*, was published with an introduction by Bela Jr. and a running commentary by ex-wife Lillian (By then, Lillian was the widow of actor Brian Donlevy, to whom she was married from 1966 to 1972; Lillian died in 1981). The family-authorized book was published without any input from Hope. Included, however, was a report from a social worker, who had visited Bela during his last marriage:

When he related the story of his separation and divorce from his last wife (Lillian), he cried constantly. He became more upset when I tried to make a comment and snapped at me to be quiet. He said that he was unable to work because of physical problems, but remarked that his wife does not concern him with financial responsibilities. The patient was amused by his (current) wife's willingness to marry him under those circumstances. He said that she received so little from their relationship that there must be something wrong with her. Patient was bitter about his advanced age and seemed to be unable to cope with it.

Also in 1976, Hope moved to Hawaii, and worked in the leper hospital on Molokai.

I loved the leper colony. We had loads of fun! The lepers all had money, and we'd go to a nice restaurant. I remember one leper who had very little of his fingers left. It never bothered him—if the waitress didn't cut up his meat for him, we did. If anybody looked like he was staring, we knew it was a tourist and told him to go suck a duck!

By the time I contacted her in 1993, Hope Lugosi was retired, living along in a modest apartment in Honolulu. Although her name was listed along with Bela Jr.'s in the famous lawsuit with Universal over Lugosi's likeness, Hope made no attempt to profit. She tried to hide from fans, researchers and memorabilia hunters. She loved to read, and would slyly tell me how she relaxed in the Honolulu heat by relaxing in her apartment stripped nude.

"You won't believe this," she exclaimed in the midst of one telephone conversation, "but I haven't got a stitch on!"

In 1994, Tim Burton's *Ed Wood* came to theatres. Hope Lugosi was not characterized in the film, nor was there any mention of her existence—which was just the way she wanted it. Hope attended with her friend, Will Hoover, reporter for the Honolulu *Advertiser* newspaper, agreeing to an interview and posing for a newspaper photographer outside the Varsity theater. She enjoyed the film, but she naturally had her irreverent reservations—including some for Martin Landau, whose portrayal of Lugosi won him great acclaim and an Oscar. She wrote to me:

Lugosi would have hated Landau for representing him as an old, ugly, foul-mouthed has-been. I disliked that language in *Ed Wood*, too. Lugosi never said a small "damn" around me or my friends; nor did Ed Wood or any of the others



Hope with a black cat in Johnstown, Penn., early 1920s. Photo courtesy of Charles Heard.

(continued)

that I knew. I'm glad the Academy cut Landau off in his acceptance speech at the Awards. He's too long-winded, never knew Lugosi, and he should have said "Thank you" and bowed out!

Hope did acquiesce to one bit of notoriety in the box office bomb-wake of *Ed Wood*: she appeared in a flash clip, identified as "Mrs. Bela Lugosi," in a Halloween Pizza Hut commercial. She agreed to do it only after being assured it would only be shown in Hawaii.

Hope's end came quite quickly, from liver cancer. Bela Lugosi had been reportedly terrified of death, "...death doesn't hold the curse for me it did for him," Hope had said 40 years ago. Charles Heard, who spent some time with Hope during her last days, remembers that she faced death quietly and stoically, grateful to the last for her friends.

Her note on her last Christmas card to me had seemed a bit emotional. Now I knew why.

She left the hospital, going home to her apartment and books. Death came about 5:00 A.M., April Fool's Day—a fact Hope would have enjoyed. (She also would probably have appreciated that she died in 1997—the 100th anniversary of the publication of *Dracula*.) She was 78 years old.

Hope Lugosi was to be cremated, and the ashes buried on Molokai.

A thousand miles of Pacific Ocean separate the graves of the last Mrs. Bela Lugosi, and her demonic idol. In the fanciful Hollywood of 1997, one can only anticipate the rumors that the ghosts of Bela and Hope tandemly haunt the old apartment on Harold Way—reportedly now occupied by



Chicanos with absolutely no interest in the apartment's Hollywood history.

And haunting me, after Charles Heard's call came that night that Hope had died, was the tag line of Chuck Moses' 1988 interview: Hope's words, "Open the window." Yes, they were probably just another example of her macabre sense of humor. But more nagging were the reasons behind that humor.

Hope Lugosi was a woman whose dream had become a nightmare. The Count Dracula she beheld on screen in 1931 was a heartbreaking (if noble) wreckage, wracked by age, divorce, drug addiction, alcoholism and Hollywood apathy, by the night she married him in 1955. He had accepted her love, her idolatry, her financial support, all the while believing there was "something wrong with her," pining for his previous wife, and—almost certainly, at least by the end of the marriage—not loving her.

It was a bizarre, doomed and terribly sad marriage.

Yet behind all the grim jokes and salty cynicism, it was evident that Hope had—and did—always love him. Even in his miserable last year, the old magic, the quality that has made Bela Lugosi so beloved a star today, would flare up and spark; Hope had seen it and shared in it. I think that, in her own, private way, Hope Lininger Lugosi was glad she had fulfilled the destiny she'd selected, pursued—and suffered—to be the last Bride of Dracula. As she told me:

All my friends found his continental suavity and manner enchanting. He never failed to treat guests with the greatest of courtesy. Rest assured that you, and all the people now interested in him, would have loved to have met him—and he would have treated you like princes. ■



ATTENTION ALL COLLECTORS!

TIRED OF GETTING RIPPED OFF WITH CHEAP TAPES & POOR PICTURE?

WORLD *BEYOND* VIDEO

PRESENTS

SCI-FI - HORROR - RARE TV SHOWS - DRAMA - COMEDY - ADVENTURE - JAPANESE & MEXICAN SCI-FI



***HONEY WEST(60'S)**

***SHAZAM (70'S)**

***U.F.O.**

***TIME TUNNEL**

***SPACE 1999**

Alien Factor. Astounding She Monster. Blackenstein. Corruption. Bride And The Beast. Curse Of Bigfoot. Dr Death. Dr Goldfoot And The Bikini Machine. Dr Gore. Frankenstein 80. Gamera VS Monster X. Giant Spider Invasion. God Told Me To. Invasion Of The Star Creatures. Konga. Love Me Deadly. Mad Bomber. Majin Strikes Again. Mako,Jaws Of Death. Man With X-Ray Eyes. Mighty Gorga. Gamera VS Zigra. Mission Mars. Beauties And The Beast. Night Of The Bloody Apes. Not Of This Earth. Planets Against Us. Psychomania. Reptilicus. Mantis In Lace. Snow Devils. Thing With Two Heads. Face Of Fire. UFO's Are Real. War In Space. War Of The Gargantuas. Wild World Of Batwoman. Yeti. Beast Of The Yellow Night. Mighty Peking Man. Horror Of Frankenstein. Great Alligator. Barbarella. Brain Of Blood. Dracula VS. Frankenstein. Creation Of The Humanoids. Assignment Terror. Boogens. Destroy All Planets. Death Sport. Day Time Ended. Daughter Of Dr. Jekyll.

And Hundreds More!

***INCREDIBLE HULK**

***KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER**

***BUCK ROGERS**

***VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA**





ALL TITLES ARE $20.00 INCLUDING S&H. ORDER (5) TAPES OR MORE & GET NEXT ONE FREE!
ORDER (10) TAPES OR MORE AND PAY ONLY $16.00 PER TAPE AND GET NEXT TAPE FREE!
SEND $2.00 FOR CATALOG OR GET FREE CATALOG WITH ORDER.
MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO:

WORLD *BEYOND* VIDEO
P.O. BOX 8091
EASTPOINTE, MICH 48021

ALL TITLES COME ON NAME BRAND VHS TAPES AT SP MODE. VHS ORDES ONLY!
ALL MATERIAL WAS TAKEN FROM THE BEST MASTERS OBTAINABLE!

It finally came down to it! SWV has separated the Hard from the Soft of it's video library to create this essential catalog and reference book for you Nostalgic Porn fans out there!

SOMETHING WEIRD VIDEO®

STEP RIGHT UP AND GET YOUR SWV BLUE BOOK!

WE'RE ADDING OVER 140 NEW VIDEO TITLES TO OUR HARDCORE CATALOG (MORE THAN 90 ARE DOUBLE FEATURES!)

Besides being a complete listing and descriptions for our ever popular **Bucky Beaver Stags, Loops & Peeps, Solo Gals, Grandpa Bucky's,** and **70's Triple XXX Movie House Trailers** you also get delightful commentary by our team of "experts" for each of our **Bucky Goes to the Movies** Feature Films & **Dragon Art Theatre Double Features!**

(The new home of our Happy Hardcore Video Library!)



Bucky by Reverend Eric Eye

OUR PAL BUCKY BEAVER!

OTHER TREATS IN STORE FOR YOU:

- The inside story on storefront theatres!
- White Coaters & F***umentaries!
- 42nd Street in it's heyday!
- Johnny Legend's very own "Legend of Porn"!
- Raunchy Regional Rants & Ramblings!
- Rare photos and graphics documenting this seedy era!
- Loving tributes to Rene Bond, Uschi Digard and Candy Samples!
- The famous Pussycat Theatre (by none other than Dave Friedman!)
- The story of Bucky Beaver comic!
- The 70's Gay Scene!
- Seattle's own Skid Row!
- And much, much more!

And we've got a deal for you! The first 2000 who sign up and send $5 in with the coupon provided will get the SWV BLUE BOOK at half off the $10 cover price and will be put on the preferred customer list to receive a special discount coupon and free gift! TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OFFER TODAY!

(Please note that anyone who isn't on the SWV Blue mailing list will NOT receive any future mailings featuring Triple XXX-Rated video titles. The new catalog allows us to separate our Hardcore titles from the regular SWV catalog (you know the soft stuff, exploitaion & sexploitation!)

SWV BLUE CATALOG MAILING LIST

Please enclose $5 with this coupon
(Half off the $10 cover price!)
Mail to: SOMETHING WEIRD VIDEO®
PO Box 33664, Seattle, WA 98133
(206) 361-3759 Fax (206) 364-7526

Neme _____

Address _____

_____

_____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

I hereby state that I am over 21 years of age and am requesting sexually explicit material for my own personal use

Portrait of Hope

by her friend, Charles Heard

September 28, 1995:
"I'm going to a wedding banquet and the shirt will be on me. You know how crazy I am, that should give the newlyweds a start to see old witch Lugosi all decorated with the horrific signs of Halloween."

May 1997:

One of the great pleasures of my life has been a unique friendship with the character—curmudgeon—cat woman who penned the aforementioned words to me. Sherry and I had sent our friend, Hope Lugosi, a decorated blouse in honor of her favorite holiday, Halloween. She adored the scary images of spiders, witches, black cats, ghosts, and of course, bats on the orange garment. Typically, Hope responded to the gift with a prompt, heartfelt and humorous letter of thanks, the envelope festooned with sparkly stickers of dragonflies, cats and bats. I mourn the fact that my mailbox will no longer be graced with her frequent and friendly letters. Letters filled with humor, tirades against big liberal government and political correctness, newspaper clippings, observations about current affairs, and updates on her latest reading adventures.

Hope Louise Lininger Lugosi was a delightful, artistic, complex, caustic, eccentric lady. She grew up in the rural community of Johnstown, PA. Her mother, Ida, had the gift of second sight (which some believe was passed on to Hope) and was known as a healer and wise-woman. Ida was renowned for her "folk-cures" with herbs and, according to Hope, had the ability to instantly take away burn injury pain by the technique of "blowfire," simply blowing her breath on the burned area! At an early age, Hope developed a lifelong love and fascination with cats. In nearly all of her childhood photos she is seen holding cats. Her apartment in Honolulu was absolutely filled with cat things, shelves brimming with glass cats, bejeweled cats, wooden cats, cat pictures, cat calendars, cat books... I suspect she was a cat herself in a previous life or she may yet return as one. Hope's feline qualities were evident: her hazel piercing eyes, her raspy and purring voice, her absolute disdain for birds, her fierce independence and love of solitude. Catlike, she loved to curl up in her favorite chair—Bela's overstuffed and, unfortunately termite-ridden, chair from the old Hollywood days—where she would spend countless hours reading and rereading selections from her extensive treasury of books. These well worn volumes afforded her companionship and entertainment in her quiet retirement years. Her extensive library had books on ghosts, vampires, and gypsies. She was very fond of the late novelist,



Hope with second husband Jose
Photo courtesy of Charles Heard

Shirley Jackson who wrote "The Haunting Of Hill House." Martin Cruz Smith and Tony Hillerman were favorite authors. Hope had her real life heroes like Jim Bowie and Chuck Yeager whom she adored. Books on the circus and P.T. Barnum fascinated Hope who was a true romantic with old world values. Far from Waikiki, on the isolated island of Molokai, where she lived for a decade (1976-1986), Hope immersed herself in Hawaiian classes of history and folklore. She knew all about Madame Pele and the old Hawaiian gods. And she could tell you where the old pagan spooky stuff happened.



Waving his marriage license, Bela Lugosi kisses Hope Lininger just after they obtained it at Santa Monica for their wedding that evening

Hope's intellect and talents were displayed in many forms as an artist, musician, and writer. She would be the first to dispel and make light of these gifts in her modest and humble way. Those who knew her however remember a sharp, self-educated lady, a member of MENSA, a skilled painter, and accomplished pianist. Her long time friend, Jean O'Keefe, recalls Hope's ability to sit down at the piano and play virtually any popular music by ear. Hope told me of joining the Mormon church on Molokai specifically so that she would have the opportunity to play the church piano. She was not a religious person. On the other side of the coin (and to my great delight), Hope reminded me of W.C. Fields in many ways. Like Fields, Hope distrusted lawyers, politicians, doctors and most people in general. She disliked children referring to them as "rugrats" and when she would hear them playing outside would gruffly yell at them to shut up and disperse.

I just loved her wicked and off-beat sense of humor. While visiting Hope in 1995, we went out for a late dinner to a Burger King restaurant in a rather posh area of Honolulu known as Hawaii Kai. No sooner had we sat down to our burgers and fries when a rude young employee there walked by our table and informed us that the restaurant would be closing in ten minutes. Five minutes later this boorish fellow dimmed the restaurant lights up and down to reinforce his previous message to us. Exasperated, Hope put down her cheeseburger and began fishing around in her purse for something. "I'll show that little bastard!" That something that she pulled out of her purse proved to be a battery operated black bat which, when she activated it, emitted a high pitched squeaking sound and its red eyes started pulsating. Hope pointed the gruesome bat at the guy and simultaneously emulated the hypnotic Dracula "whammy" gesture with her right hand all the while cackling, muttering dreadful curses, and giving him the "evil eye!!!" When driving in the area the next day, I was surprised to see the restaurant still standing and wondered if the unfortunate Burger King worker would ever the ability to sire children.

Of course I wanted to know all about the great Bela Lugosi. Hope's memories of him were selective and somewhat distant as he had been dead for forty years. After attending a screening of *Ed Wood* with her friend Will Hoover, Hope wrote to me: "I never heard Bela say any of those words—certainly never around me. Not even when he was drinking. It wasn't his style. Bela wasn't the sad creature that was portrayed either. I like to think I made his last year a little cheery."

In January 1997, Hope was diagnosed with terminal cancer. I flew over for a final visit with my wonderful friend. She never once complained about her illness or suffering. At that time she presented me with a three page essay that she had written many years before about her long ago marriage to the king of the vampires, Bela Lugosi. Here, published for the very first time anywhere are her words.

As Hope Lugosi once said to me, quite appropriately I can say back to her: Mahalo nui loa for your friendship—All My Aloha, Charles.■

From Out of a TIME ROTTED TOMB crawls...

NETWORK ENTERPRISES







TERRIFYING... WEIRD... MACABRE!

PRESENTS

Rare and Unusual films available on video cassette

BLUSH a little!

Because HORROR IS PAYING OFF AGAIN!



THE MOST AMAZING MOTION PICTURES OF OUR TIME?

"DESTROY ALL MONSTERS"
COLOR
MOTHRA GODZILLA RODAN MANDA

-MR. SARDONICUS (1961)-
This man has one heck of a smile!

-THE DEATH KISS (1933)-
This kiss is murder! Lugosi stars.

-THE TOLL OF THE SEA (1922)-
Silent film starring Anna Mae Wong.
A rare gem!

-SHE (1925)-
Silent film starring Betty Blythe.
YOU MUST OBEY HER!!

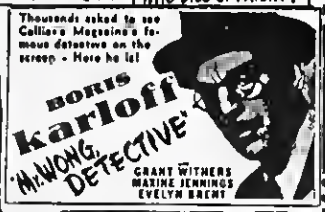
-THE FURY OF HERCULES (1961)-
This is one guy you do not get mad!



ANNA MAY WONG as the Tiger Girl
'DAUGHTER OF THE DRAGON'

EXTRA! AMBULANCE ON CALL FOR THOSE WHO FAINT! FREE BURIAL TO ANYONE WHO DIES OF FRIGHT!











WRESTLING NEWS RELEASE



** WRESTLING CLASSICS OF THE 60's-80's
SEE: THE SHEIK, ABDULLAH vs THE FUNK BROS
SEE: BRUISER BRODY vs THE SHEIK
SEE: ANDRE THE GIANT, SAILOR ART THOMAS, BARON VON RASCHKE, HELL'S ANGELS, ERNIE LADD, many, many more!
Hurry, hurry! Quantities are limited on these wrestling classics! Order now while they last!

ALL TITLES $19.95





ORDER TODAY

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (___) _____

Print complete title	Qty	Amount

To insure fast service send bank checks or money orders to

NETWORK ENTERPRISES
P.O. BOX 12466
HAMTRAMCK, MI 48212

Orders phoned in NETWORK ENTERPRISES
NETWORK HOTLINE: (313) 693-6204

Amount of Order
Total Postage & Handling
($3.75 1st tape $1.50 ea. extra)
MI residents add 6% sales tax
Total Amount

* Listings of all merchandise sent with every order *

MERCHANDISE SOLD COLLECTOR TO COLLECTOR • NO RIGHTS KNOWN GIVEN OR IMPLIED



DON'T BE ASHAMED TO SCREAM. IT HELPS RELIEVE THE TENSION!









Personal Recollections of Bela Lugosi

by Hope Lugosi



I married Bela Lugosi August 1955 and buried him August 1956, one year later, almost to the day. I know only what I have read of his life prior to 1955 and what little he chose to tell me, so I leave that part of his life and career to his varying biographies and news clippings—some fairly accurate—most, I am sure, embellished by journalistic imagination and fanciful romanticizing.

Mr. Lugosi was an actor's actor, and like all actors, the supreme egotist. He never stopped acting for a moment night or day. I doubt I ever had even a glimpse of the real man. It was buried long, long before in the world of make-believe.

After reading a variety of articles filled with half-truths and some downright lies, I'd like his faithful fans to know some of the true facts of this last year of his colorful life.

It is said a man's inner soul can be judged quite accurately by the pictures he chooses to decorate his home. Bela had several fine old paintings of the gloomiest, darkest cemeteries imaginable, expressing the Hungarian morbidity that always haunted him as part of his heritage. There were also two portraits, one a life size showing him as he really was; and the other, a character study of his head. the balance of the paintings which carpeted our walls from floor to ceiling in every room were mostly fine originals, water-colors, etchings, oils, crayon drawings, mostly landscapes and seascapes, all dark and stormy. One crayon drawing I prize now is a caricature of an Hungarian cowboy. Most of the etchings were also caricatures, attesting to his very peculiar sense of humor which took surprising turns at times. It never failed to delight him to answer the telephone by announcing "this is the morgue" in his best Dracula voice. This provided much hilarity for his friends and scared the daylights out of the unsuspecting who dialed a wrong number.

At one time he owned a very fine collection of recordings of Hungarian music, as well as an extremely valuable stamp collection, featuring Hungarian stamps. His collection of books on the occult and witchcraft including many first editions, was a notable one.

All the heavy gold draperies from his last home gave our small modern apartment a darkly shimmering cave-like feeling. When I protested about the immediate dismal atmosphere, he announced that only clerks and other pedestrian people live in brightly-lighted, look-alike abodes with the ordinary run-of-the-mill furnishings. Our furniture matched the draperies—dark and heavily constructed. He, as Lugosi, had to have a style befitting the role he never stopped playing. It made for a rather interesting decor in a Transylvanian sort of way and one learned to live with it after a while.

One evening he decided we should visit his former homes. We went to two of them, to the delight and astonishment of the present occupants. These houses were exactly what one might have expected. Much of the original furnishings remained as they had been custom built to Mr. Lugosi's taste for these dwellings. The wood was very dark and overwhelmingly heavily constructed. No dainty, delicate Louis XIV decor for Dracula's homes. One house, hidden in a miniature forest of tall trees still had the piano that Rachmaninoff had played at one of Lugosi's social functions. Or so he assured me. Even the Doberman Pinscher dogs he raised at one time reflected his taste for fierce brooding things to be brought under his command.

His health and food were of prime importance to him and he was an extremely fussy eater. The greatest compliment he ever gave me was that of five wives and the best cooks money could hire—I was the best cook of all. He was right, of course. I am a great cook.

Bela ate mostly lamb stew, caviar, papayas by the dozens, brains, lungs, yogurt and never would touch anything that wasn't room temperature. Sometimes his niece prepared special Hungarian dishes, contents unknown to me, and presented it to us or had us over for dinner. They spoke no English so I silently and politely ate God knows what and listened to the few words of the guttural Hungarian language that were spoken during these less than sociable events.

When Bela was very affluent (claiming that he had been a millionaire three times in his life) he had his drinking water imported from Europe. During our marriage, the best I could manage was a bottled water supposedly from artesian wells in Los Angeles. I hoped he'd never find out that it was rumored the company uses a run-off from the L.A. city water reservoir.

My friends melted at the sight of Mr. Lugosi because he was old-world gallantry personified. He never failed to kiss their hands and any visitor was treated like royalty. Even if he'd had a bit too much wine, a knock on the door brought forth instant total sobriety and a perfectly disciplined affable host.

Having a tremendous love and respect for the industry which had both furthered his career and at the same time often misused his talent, Lugosi adored all movies, especially his old ones. He never missed an opportunity to see one in a theater in preference to television. He'd announce loudly in that wonderful resonant voice what a handsome devil he was on the screen, so that the whole audience knew he was present. His favorite roles, besides *Dracula*, were *The Black Cat* and *The Raven* because in these he used little or no makeup and really was astonishingly handsome. His one disappointment in his features was his very small, sharp blue eyes. He envied my very large hazel eyes.

Bela was a past master at handling the press—something I never caught the knack of and therefore remained silent most of the time. He talked up a storm and entertained them royally for hours. After it was all over, to their chagrin I'm sure, they discovered he'd really said nothing of importance in the way of the newsy gossip they'd been fishing for. Outside of one columnist whom he disdained, he really liked and respected all the press and maintained wonderful relations with them, wisely knowing what power they wield over the careers of performers.

He loved the public as a whole and joyously dispensed autographs to one and all at every opportunity. He considered it a great privilege and duty, unlike some of our modern entertainers who "despise" publicity and literally bite and snarl at the hand that feeds them. Once we passed tourists looking at the footprints in the patio of Grauman's Chinese Theater in Hollywood, Mr. Lugosi stopped the car and called the crowd to



"come see a real live actor." It was a very happy, thrilled group who went away later with autographs and a delicious feeling that one of the all time "greats" had sincerely enjoyed visiting with them.

Bela did not drive, nor do I, but we had many friends who took us wherever we wished. He was generous to a fault and wined and dined our chauffeurs with glee. He was a charming, well-read conversationalist and we had many enjoyable, social evenings both at home and in various Hungarian cafes. The Little Gypsy was a favorite haunt where I was introduced to the beauty of the music of the cymbolom while sipping Egri Bikavir, a wonderful Hungarian wine which is still my favorite.

I once asked Mr. Lugosi if he was ever sorry he played Dracula and was thus type-cast ever after, a fact that nearly sent him scurrying for welfare when monster movies were in disfavor for a time. He replied that Dracula made him a success financially and ruined him artistically. Prior to Dracula, he had been the John Barrymore of Europe, playing Romeo, Cyrano, etc.—all romantic roles. He admitted to me he was too handsome for his own good as a young man which led to endless romantic snarls both in Europe and the United States. His last pictures made in Hollywood might be called disasters in every respect, with only small cameo roles, hoping a "has-been" actor's name could draw a crowd still. Maybe so—but as a wise man once said, it's better to have been a has-been than a "never-was" and somehow the old Lugosi magic managed to survive in a reduced degree.



His final curtain would have delighted him in every respect. The funeral was just as garish, exotic and publicity-filled as his entire life had been with people sobbing loudly, gypsy violin music wailing and flash bulbs popping. Best of all was the long, long funeral procession down the length of Hollywood Blvd.

His grave is near Dixie Lee Crosby's in the lovely Grotto of our Lady of Lourdes division of Holy Cross cemetery. Despite some recently written articles depicting strange happenings at the grave, there is nothing unusual nor eerie about it. It is simply another grave among many. His commemorative star shines brightly on the corner of Ivar and Hollywood Blvd. and is to me his true grave marker, seen by all the world who walk the Blvd.

Finally, I would like to leave you with the memory I still have and always will—of a great actor who missed nothing in life; tasted every delight and honor and suffered many defeats, but who managed nonetheless to live and die with all the grandiose fanfare and individualism he so relished. As one waggist reporter said when he heard of Mr. Lugosi's death, "don't worry, he'll be back." Meeting so many people over the years who remember him and are still interested in his life and work, and with grateful thanks to the reruns on the late-late shows on TV, I sometimes feel that he has never really left. It was truly a year to remember ■

Japanese Genre Film Mavericks – Part 2

by Chris D.

Japanese genre film authority Chris D. concludes his look at some of the mavericks of Japanese film and their works.



Cruelty of Shogunate's Downfall *Directed by Tai Kato*

Seijun Suzuki

Having already paid his dues, laboring at Shochiku since 1949 as an assistant director but with no sign of moving up the ladder (there were at least 60 others ahead of him in seniority), Suzuki transferred to the reviving Nikkatsu and started as an assistant director there almost from the time they reopened their doors as a film production concern in early 1954. The studio was the oldest in Japan. Although the heads of the company had had their own production companies or theater chains before, it wasn't until 1912 when the trust they'd formed together became the Nippon Katsudo Shashin (Japan Cinematograph Company) that the corporation took shape. The name was soon shortened to Nikkatsu. They were fairly successful for a time with the famous Shozo Makino and then his son, Masahiro, among the filmmakers working. Kurosawa also started there as an assistant director in the 1930s.

However, in 1941-1942, the wartime government, wanting to consolidate the growing number of production companies that had mushroomed in the thirties, ordered the ten existing concerns to merge into two! Masaichi Nagata (founder and head of Daiei) proposed a new plan where the companies would form into four rather than two. The government approved. The companies were all happy about this except for Nikkatsu who were being forced to connect up with Shinko and Daito, the two weakest businesses. When they complained, the commitee establishing value for each company retaliated by purposely undervaluing Nikkatsu, making Shinko the prime dominant head of productions. As this was Nagata's company, soon to evolve into what is now known as Daiei, there weren't any complaints from that quarter. However, this effectively put Nikkatsu out of film production (although they were allowed to keep their lucrative theater holdings).

Kyusaku Hori, Nikkatsu's owner, noticing from 1951 on that there was a tremendous growth potential for film production, decided to build new studios and resumed making films in early 1954. Suzuki had had his college studies curtailed in 1943 when he was drafted into the Navy. Perhaps an incident from this time might give insight to Suzuki's dark sense of humor, humor that is basically a *'sanity'safety'valve'* for dealing with the horrors of life, particularly during wartime. Suzuki has mentioned wounded soldiers being hauled up the side of a transport ship in their stretchers—unfortunately, the trip up took quite a few minutes and each time the men pulling at the palates would jerk the ropes, the men would bounce into the side of the ship. Apparently, you could hear the moans all the way on deck with each heft of the stretcher cables. Although pretty damn painful for the men in the stretchers, bystanders couldn't help but laugh at the ridiculousness of the situation. Much as seeing somebody slip on a banana peel or watching those cute, fuzzy little animals doing horrifyingly violent acts to each other in the American cartoons of the forties and fifties. That's not to say Suzuki's humor is of the broad, cartoon variety. But it is humor borne out of pain, laughing to keep from crying—or screaming for that matter.

Suzuki's first film as assistant director at Shochiku was *Red Lips Not Yet Erased* (*Shushin Imada Kezu*) in 1949 directed by Minoru Shibuya. While there he also served as assistant director on other pictures helmed by Shibuya, Ko Sasaki, Noburu Nakamura and Tsuruo Iwama. Suzuki has stated (facetiously?) that, since he was allowed to pick which director/crew he could work with, his only criteria was if they were a heavy-drinking crowd. When he transferred to Nikkatsu in 1954, he first worked on the coming attractions for the *matatabi* (samurai yakuza) film *Chuji Kunisada* (*Kunisada Chuji*) directed by Eisuke Takiwaza and what sounds like a mystery, *Dark Tide* (*Kuroi Cho*) directed by So Yamamura. He became fullf-ledged assistant director on two more films in 1954, *Flower of Karatashi* (*Karatashi No Hana*) directed by Kiyoshi Saeki and *Our Guns Are Quick* (*Ore No Kenju Suboyai*) directed by Hiroshi Noguchi. Suzuki's first screenplay, *Duel at Sunset* (*Rakujitsu No Ketto*) co-written by another future Nikkatsu director, Tan Ida, was lensed in 1955 by Noguchi. Suzuki finally did his debut feature as director in 1956, a traditional pop music film called *Harbor Toast—Victory Is In Our Grasp* (*Minato No Kanpai -Shori O Wagate Ni*). He continued directing second features of double bills and the occasional A feature. The first year he started receiving some critical appreciation for his films was in 1963, the year of *Private Eye Office #23 -Wicked Alliance Destroyed* (*Tantei Jimusho Nijusan*), *Youth of the Beast* (*Yaju No Seishun*), and *The Bastard* (*Akutaro*). From *Youth of the Beast* onwards he started receiving warnings from his superiors about the eccentric visual quality/"weird" juxtapositions creeping into his films. A *Tattooed Life* (*Irezumi Ichidai*) ('65) was a film that really had elements that bothered the bosses—a sword fight climax that had such stylized lighting/color and set design, as well as violence choreographed to the point it almost seemed danced, it could make viewers think they were watching a kabuki play. The straw that broke the camel's back was *Branded to Kill* (*Koroshi No Rakuin*) ('67) which the top brass felt was unintelligible. Suzuki was fired that same

year. There were immediate protests from his colleagues as well as student film clubs who had legions of his fans. Suzuki went into litigation. Surprisingly enough, he had evidence that Nikkatsu head, Hori, intended using him, Suzuki, as a scapegoat for the studio's economic woes so he could institute some changes he felt wouldn't be too popular with his other directors.The lawsuit dragged on for three years before Suzuki finally won.However, the major studios joined together in blackballing him. He made commercials and wrote articles/essays until 1977 when he was once again able to direct a feature film, *Tale of Sorrow and Sadness* (*Hishu Monogatari*).

Some Films by Seijun Suzuki (selected from over 44 films he's done)

1956 ***Satan's Town*** (*Akuma No Machi*) 79 min. w/ Seizaburo Kawazu, Shinsuke Ashida, Ichiro Sugai, Akiyoshi Fukae, Azusa Yumi, Akitake Kono (Suzuki's 3rd film) (Nikkatsu) (No Video)

1957 ***Nude and the Gun*** (*Rajo To Kenju*) 88 min, w/ Michitaro Mizushima, Mari Shiraki, Ichiro Sugai, Jun Hamamura, Hideaki Nitani Mizushima does his initial turn, at least in a Suzuki picture, of black-clad hero with many big guns at his disposal. (his 6th film) (Nikkatsu Studios) (No Video)

1958 ***Beautiful Underworld Woman*** (*Ankoku Goi No Bijo* aka *Beauty of the Underworld* aka *Queen of The Slums*) 87 min w/ Michitaro Mizushima, Shinsuke Ashida, Toru Abe, Mari Shiraki, Kaku Takashina, Hideaki Nitani, Setsuko Amemiya

Mizushima does a reprise of his *Nude and the Gun* role, or so it would seem from the photos I've spied (he's in the same black outfit with a big gun). However, he's called something different in this one. Shiraki has another moniker, too, despite being the sexy beauty referred to in each film's title. (his 7th film (*this was his first widescreen film*) (Nikkatsu Studios) (NoVideo)

1959 ***Love Letter*** (*Rabu Retaa*) 40min. w/ Kyosuke Machida, Frankie Nagai, Hisako Tsukuba, Keisuke Yukioka Ignored at the time of its release, this later was one of the films to achieve praise upon Suzuki's "critical reevaluation". A female nightclub pianist carries on a romantic correspondence with an ill fellow (Machida) living in a mountain cabin. Suddenly, the letters change tone then stop altogether. Alarmed by this, the woman broods until advised by her boss (popular singer, Nagai)who is smitten w/her, to make the pilgrimage & unravel the mystery. She finds that her lover has died only to be replaced by his twin brother. She returns to the nightclub with confused, ambivalent feelings. All through the fifties, Japanese studios had the habit of often making second features on a double bill about half-to-two-thirds the length of their A/first feature. This was one such creation. (his 11th film) (Nikkatsu Studios) (No Video)

1959 ***Age of Nudity*** (*Suppadaka No Nenrei*) 54 min. w/ Keiichuro Akagi, Uyako Hori, Saburo Fujimaki, Masako (Saneko?) Ozawa, Yoshiyuki Shimizu, Bokuzen Hidari Kinetic saga full of vitality concerning a gang of street urchin juvenile delinquents riding around on scooters and motorbikes in a coastal resort town. They're led by reckless Akagi, and, though most are in their teens, a couple of the goonier boys don't look as if they've quite achieved the golden mantle of puberty. They're constantly in trouble for everything from disturbing the peace to stealing motorcycles. Hidari plays a kind of hobo/ clown Greek chorus in much the same way Kamatari Fujiwara portrayed the strange mute beggar that Warren Beatty kept running into everywhere in Arthur Penn's *Mickey One* ('65). Akagi ends up challenging his rival to a race down a twisting mountain road—what amounts to a game of chicken that ends in his death as he plummets over a cliff to the rocks of the beach below. An ending that pre-echoes his own real-life death in a sportscar accident in February, 1961 (after just turning 21). Of course, that effectively ended his career as one of Nikkatsu's rising young leading men. Strangely enough, the dozen or so films he made before his death are all in print on Japanese video (his most popular: the 4 film *Villian Gun Diary* (*Kenju Buraicho*) series), testifying to his posthumous ongoing popularity. It's much the same phenomenon that's enjoyed by the late Raizo Ichikawa (star of Daiei's *Kyoshiro Nemuri, Ninja—Band of Assassins* and *Young Boss* film series, et.al.) a type of James Dean-worship (although Ichikawa is quite a bit more popular than



Tokyo Drifter, *directed by Seijun Suzuki*

Akagi). Also -just a note: the title is a total misnomer -there's not even any partial nudity in the film. (his 13th film) * * * VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1960 ***Fighting Delinquents*** (*Kutabare Gurentai aka Hoodlums Destroyed*) 80 min. w/ Koji Wada, Mayumi Shimizu, Eitaro Ozawa, Hiroshi Kondo (Suzuki's 18th and *first color film*) (Nikkatsu Studios) (No Video)

1961 ***Man With the Shotgun*** (*Shottagan No Otoko*) 84 min. w/ Hideaki Nitani, Izumi Ashikawa, Yuji Kodaka, Yoko Minamida, Eiji Go, Asao Sano (Color) (his 20th film) (Nikkatsu Studios) (No Video)

1963 ***Private Eye Office #23 -Wicked Alliance Destroyed*** (*Tantei Jimusho Nijusan -Kutabare Akutodomo aka Go To Hell, Bastards!*) 89 min. w/ Jyo Shishido, Reiko Sassamori, Nobuo Kaneko, Tamio Kawaji, Asao Sano, Kinzo Shin Bizarre nuttiness with hep cool cat (Shishido) in an Austin Healey working for a detective bureau to break up band of hoods that've stolen weapons from a U.S. Army base. Much more conventional than Suzuki's other Shishido thriller in '63, *Youth of the Beast* (*Yaju No Seishun*) but you can certainly still see the irreverent visual humor straining to be set free, especially in some hilarious nightclub scenes, great '60s rock/R&B/ Dixieland (!) hybrid score, and, last but not least, a flaming gas jet finale down in the villain (Shin) 's cellar. Kan Hanase directed the sequel *Private Eye Office #23 A Man Into Women and Maney* (*Tantei Jimusho Nijusan -Zeni To Onna Ni Otoko*) also w/ Shishido the same year, but from all appearances it didn't perform as well at the box office and the series was discontinued. (Color) (his 26th film) * * * VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1963 ***Youth of the Beast*** (*Yaju No Seishun*) 92 min. w/ Jyo Shishido, Ichiro Kijima, Misako Watanabe, Tamio Kawaji, Shoji Kobayashi, Nobuo Kaneko One of Suzuki's absolute wildest. Maniac tough guy, Shishido swaggers through the squalid streets, surreal nightclubs, camp-early-sixties apartments beating-the-shit out of anyone who gives him any lip. He infiltrates a couple of different gangs and starts the old *Yojimbo/Man With No Name*-game of playing one bunch of folks off against another. About midway through it's found out he's an undercover cop, and guys start tying him upside down to chandeliers and sticking sharp things under his fingernails. Has many strange interludes including gangster boss' addict mistress halucinating, Shishido reporting to a police substation that's disguised as a knitting school, Shishido using a can of hairspray as improvised blowtorch to torture info out of a movie theater manager on the gang's payroll, etc.,. Mucho wild and wooly action choreographed in a riot of carefully selected color and boisterous black humor.(Color)(his 27th film) * * * * VHS/LASER (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1963 ***The Bastard*** (*Akutaro*) 95min. w/ Satoshi (Ken?) Yamanouchi, Masako Izumi, Mieko Takamine, Midori Tashiro, Shinsuke Ashida

(continued)



Tale of the Meiji Era Chivalry—Third in Succession *Directed by Tai Kato*

Suzuki's first stab at a literary adaptation that Nikkatsu allowed, reportedly thinking it would fit in with their "*seishun*" (youth) pictures. Semi-autobiographical tale of Togo Konno, a rebellious youth circa 1905 who is expelled from an upper-crust Kobe school for carrying-on with a preacher's daughter. However, he manages to get into trouble at his new small-town school, too, falling-in-love with a doctor's offspring. The climax has him rescue her from a raging flood. (B&W) (his 28th film)VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1963 ***Kanto Wanderer*** (*Kanto Mushuku*) 93 min. w/ Akira Kobayashi, Hiroko Ito, Chieko Matsubara, Yunosuke Ito, Daisaburo Hirata, Toru Abe Good, but not as visually stimulating as some of Suzuki's other films. It opens with Suzuki poking fun at Kobayashi's matinee idol popularity, following several schoolgirls just out of class who're mooning over his photo. All the more ridiculous because he doesn't play a movie star in the film—his sex appeal is based on his status in the neighborhood as yakuza gambling den denizen. As it turns out, he never does get involved with any of the schoolgirls (Matsubara, et al.), he's in love with a crooked, married card dealer (Hiroko Ito). Much of the bizarre humor/pathos is based on the battle of the sexes—what men are willing to do or not do to attract a woman (such as kill someone) and vice-versa. Some famous beautiful scenes such as when Kobayashi gets in a sword fight near the end and the swish of his blade, just before the walls collapse and fall away, bathes the gambling den in a blood-red light. Unfortunately there's not as many of *those* moments as some critics would lead you to believe. (Color) (his 29th film) * * * VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1964 ***Flower and the Angry Waves*** (*Hana To Doto*) 92 min w/ Akira Kobayashi, Tamio Kawaji, Chieko Matsubara, Naoko Kubo, Akira Yamanouchi, Osamu Takizawa Kobayashi is young anti-hero in coal-carters' union up against rival evil yakuza clan. About midway through, one side of Kobayashi's face is horribly disfigured, something which must've played havoc with the female members of the audience. Also at the snow-bound final showdown, he seems a bit of a coward, something unheard of in a yakuza "hero". Kawaji is a sword-wielding assassin in Zorro-cape-and-hat. (Color) (his 30th film) * * * VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1964 ***Gate of Flesh*** (*Nikutai No Mon*) 90 min w/ Yumiko Nogawa, Jyo Shishido, Tomiko Ishii, Kayo Matsuo, Misako Tominaga, Koji Wada Annihilating tale of four prostitutes in post-WW2 Japan and the reversion of three of them to subhuman savagery. Nogawa plays the innocent orphan from the countryside given a crash-course in what it takes to survive in the dog-eat-dog world of a conquered nation. Shishido is a veteran/thief who likes to kill American soldiers. Some strong and disturbing scenes including the actual slaughter of a cow, the whiplash punishment by the three whores of any other whore who commits the unpardonable sin of falling-in-love, the humiliating seduction of a basically decent black American Catholic military chaplain. Shishido, because he falls-in-love with Nogawa (and vice-versa) is betrayed by the three jealous whores to the local yakuza clan who're in league with the U.S. Occupation Forces. He's shot and killed. Last shot of the film has Nogawa discovering his bloody knapsack in the dirty canal water where he died. Remade by Hideo Gosha in 1985. (Color) (his 31st film) * * * * VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1964 ***Our Blood Won't Allow It*** (*Oretachi No Chi Ga Yurusanai*) 97 min w/ Hideki Takahashi, Akira Kobayashi, Chieko Matsubara, Chikako Hosokawa, Akifumi Inoue To quote David Chute, writing in a *Film Comment* article on Suzuki, there are "...hushed mob meetings that feel like the gatherings of a coven." Kobayashi is the eldest offspring of a murdered yakuza *oyabun*. His father had elicited an oath from Kobayashi that he not pursue vengeance and that he abandon the underworld. Needless to say, he doesn't, but he *does* keep up a respectable front to decieve is hotheaded younger brother (Takahashi). An incredible nocturnal shootout in the hilly rural countryside—looking like a lushly fertile British moor—climaxes things. The last few minutes are devastating as first the fatally wounded, blood-drenched Kobayashi stumbles through the landscape, muttering thoughts about his brother, then Takahashi searches in vain for his older sibling, finding only his blood-soaked coat. The last shot is of an empty horizon with Takahashi's anguished cries echoing in the early morning. * * * 1/2 (his 32nd film) VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1965 ***Joy Girls*** (*Shunpu Den aka Story of a Prostitute*) 96 min. w/ Yumiko Nogawa Tamio Kawaji, Tomiko Ishii, Isao Tamagawa, Kazuko Imai, Kayo Matsuo Adapted from novel by Taijiro Tamura (the same writer who wrote *Gate of Flesh*). It was previously filmed in a slightly sanitized version called *Escape at Dawn* (*Akatsuki No Dasso*) ('50) directed by Senkich Taniguchi from a script by Akira Kurosawa, w/ Ryo Ikebe and Shirley Yamaguchi. It's the story of a woman disillusioned by a love affair, who, wishing to obliterate her *self*, volunteers to serve as a prostitute for the troops in 1937 Manchuria. She and Kawaji fall-in-love and, after making a futile escape into the desert wasteland, eventually die in a savage sandstorm (in what amounts to a double suicide). Nogawa gives probably the best performance of her career, an intense, heartbreaking portrayal of an intelligent, incredibly strong woman in spiritual torment being crushed by the monstrous animalistic world around her. (B&W) (his 33rd film) * * * * VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1965 ***Tattooed Life*** (*Irezumi Ichidai aka One Generation of Tattoos*) 87 min. w/ Hideki Takahashi, Masako Izumi, Hisashi Hananmoto, Hiroko Ito, Akira Yamanouchi In 1920s Japan, Takahashi kills a rival yakuza clan leader, then is forced to flee to a rural mining community with his sensitive, artistic younger brother. Wildly energetic with Suzuki's usual surreal sense of visual humor. Climactic showdown/revenge-binge has a startlingly



Elegy to Violence *aka* Fighting Elegy
Directed by Seijun Suzuki

beautiful use of theatricalized lighting and effects(it takes place during a violent thunderstorm), and, despite the slightly yellowish print, Suzuki's use of contrasting colors rivals Hitchcock and Bava, *Tattooed Life*star, Takahashi, also appeared in many other Nikkatsu yakuza and action pictures, foremost among them the yakuza series, *Emblem of a Man* (*Otoko No Monsho aka Crest of a Man*) (Color) (his 35th film) * * * 1/2 VHS/ LASER (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1966 *Carmen of Kawachi* (*Kawachi Karumen*) 89 min w/ Yumiko Nogawa, Ruriko Ito, Koji Wada, Tamio Kawaji Story of a woman's struggle for independence on both sexual and spiritual fronts. This was the film Suzuki's bosses arbitarily cut—a scene where a murdered priest returned as a ghost borne on a mysterious windstorm. The Nikkatsu big boys didn't see how a ghost could inhabit a film that wasn't a spook show, so, due to their infantilism the film apparently lacks the impact Suzuki would've liked it to have. (B&W) (his 36th film) VHS (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1966 *Tokyo Drifter* (*Tokyo Nagaremono*) 83 min w/ Tetsuya Watari, Chieko Matsubara, Hideaki Nitani, Tamio Kawaji, Ryuji Kita, Isao Tamagawa According to Japanese film critic, Tadao Sato, this is Suzuki's "most remarkable film ..for its flamboyant use of color and its comical, eccentric tempo practically turn it into a pop art display. .based on a popular song of the same title.. its absurd but amusing story .." relates the adventures of " . a modern yakuza (Watari) who is sent wandering in the provinces because of intragang warfare in Tokyo...the rhythm resembles flashes of transient beauty and humor upon the screen of a revolving lantern " Everything Sato says is true, although I'd say Suzuki's most remarkable film (of the fifteen I've seen) would have to be a threeway tie between *Youth of the Beast* ('63), *Gate of Flesh* ('64), and *Branded to Kill* ('67)

Watari gets beat up in a very high-contrast, amber-tinted pre-titles sequence to prove to an opposition gang that he and his boss (Kita) have gone straight. Which, in fact, they have Watari's attachment to Kita is very much of the father/son type, and he'll do just about anything to help his *oyabun* out of a jam Kita owes interest on loan to a comparatively honest landlord However, the other gang muscles in, trying to take over the loan. The bad guys are headquartered in the backroom of a mod nightmare of a nightclub with glass floors called the Manhole, and, if you think its design is a bit minimal, wait till you see the other club where Watari's lonely-heart, off-again-on-again girl (Matsubara) sings. Bathed in yellow light, it looks more like one's abstract impression of a nightclub in a dream—there're no walls, only a couple of tables and chairs, a staircase that leads to nowhere and a huge gold donut shape structure that, I suppose, is some sort of sculpture Suzuki was getting increasing pressure to play it visually straight from the big boys upstairs, and he slashed the budget even more than necessary to keep them happy. As a function of that, he and his longtime collaborator, set designer Takeo Kimura, improvised sets out of almost nothing, using areas of shadow and colored light to achieve the illusion of interiors They used standing interiors as well such as the western saloon where Watari has gone to hide out. Run by a friend of Kita's (Tamagawa), it serves as backdrop to a ridiculous brawl punctuated by a shootout with Kawaji, one of Watari's



Branded to Kill *Directed by Seijun Suzuki*

pursuers.

The bizarre, cavalier attutude Suzuki implements at the end, when we once again find ourselves in the club of yellow light, Watari confronting his pursuers as well as the betraying Kita, would be annoying if it wasn't also choreographed so well. The performers' rhythms as they jump and roll around, leaping for tossed guns, hiding behind ludicrously skinny columns are complimented by a dazzling editing job—there's no fat here only the lean, mean hungry skeleton of essential cinematic bones. After the last villain has been dispatched, Watari, in incongruous angelic white suit, Matsubara in his arms, casually turns his head to watch father-figure, Kita, break a glass and suicidally stab himself in the wrist. A geyser of blood festoons the white and yellow color scheme Watari bids Matsubara adieu and walks out into the Tokyo nightclubbing night Kenjiro Morinaga filmed a so-so sequel,*Tokyo Drifter—Love the Color of the Crimson Sea* (*Tokyo Nagaremono -Umi Ha Makka Na Kai No Iro*) that same year, also w/ Watari (Color) (his 37th film) * * * 1/2 VHS/ LASER (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1966 *Elegy to Violence* (*Kenka Ereji* aka *Fighting Elegy* aka *The Born Fighter*) 86 min. w/ Hideki Takahashi, Junko Asano, Yusuke Kawazu, Mitsuo Katoaka, Chikako Miyagi, Jun Hamamura Despite this being a cult film, it's still in the best tradition of

Nikkatsu being able to contrive violent situations out of the most humdrum activities of day-to-day "*seishun*" (young people) life. Nikkatsu had already let loose with several other pictures about violent students such as *Thunder College* (*Daigaku No Abarenbo*) ('60) dir. by Takumi Furukawa, so Suzuki wasn't plowing any new turf. But where he did break new ground was in the treatment, unpretentiously and, for an entertaining change, in fairly realistic style, showing the repressed energy of naive students' male sexuality a couple years past puberty. How that energy can be channeled by older "mentors" or authority figures into the controlled violence of the military. Specifically the various ultra-nationalist factions that merged into one ultra-fascist, right-wing conglomerate of pre-WW2 Japan. Where many sixties new-wave directors might've taken an overly serious, dry approach, Suzuki, per usual, juggles serious ideas, visceral displays of balletic fighting/action and irreverent humor, aided by Kaneto Shindo (director, himself, of such films as *Oni Baba* aka *Devil Witch* and *Yaba No Naka No Kuroneko* aka *Black Cat in the Forest*)'s script. Some highlights: Takahashi, in love with the very straight girl of the Catholic family he lives with, plays the piano with his penis (off-camera, of course) to get out his sexual frustation; Takahashi and a couple of pals are ambushed in the woods by a rival student group and kept prisoner at their forest stockade. Once it's dark, they manage to not only escape but capture and beat senseless their numerous captors, stringing them up half-conscious and upside-down beside a similarly-hanging bunch of dead chickens. Many of Suzuki's films weren't recognized by "serious" critics, Japanese or otherwise, until many years later; however, *Elegy to Violence* was an exception. (B&W)(his 38th film) * * * * VHS/ LASER (Japan) = Nikkatsu

1967 ***Branded to Kill*** (*Koroshi No Rakuin*) 91 min. w/ Jyo Shishido, Koji Nanbara, Annu Mari, Mariko Ogawa, Isao Tamagawa, Hiroshi Minami A tour-de-force masterpiece that has to be seen to be believed Not a traditional yakuza film per se, although probably the closest to some kind of genre Extreme violence as well as dream-like surrealism envelopes hitman, Shishido, who we can only deduce is going insane. One particular scene where he shoots up a drainpipe, hitting an eye doctor in the eye who's just removed a patient's glass eye, is simultaneously funny and shocking

A stoic hitwoman (Mari) driving a sportscar, a dead bird with a nail through its throat hanging from the dash rearview, has a strange affinity with Shishido. Despite the fact she seems to be assigned to kill him, Shishido develops an attraction for her They make love in a shadowy room filled with dead butterflies. There's many other images of like strangeness, and this is one film I can recommend without reservation whether there's English subtitles or not A cross between Eraserheadera Lynch, Sam Fuller, Jean-Pierre Melville, Luis Bunuel, Fellini and ? . Suzuki is a true original, and it surprises me that he still seems to be virtually unknown, even in intellectual, film study circles.

(continued)



History of a Man's Face. *Directed by Tai Kato*

After *Branded to Kill*, he was fired. Luckily, the film was still released. The bottom line was so tenuous that Nikkatsu needed every bit of product to release. They couldn't afford to shelve a film, which is probably what would have happened had it been an American production. Surprisingly enough, there was a genuine outcry at his dismissal. His films had been steadily developing cult status amongst students and intellectuals as well as others in the film community. (B&W) (his 39th film) * * * * VHS/LASER (Japan) = Nikkatsu (There's a good chance Criterion will be releasing subtitled discs of *Tokyo Drifter* and *Branded to Kill* in the next two years)

1980 ***Zigeunerweisen*** 145 min. w/ Yoshio Harada, Naoko Otani, Toshiya Fujita, Michiyo Okusu (formerly Yasuda) The first of Suzuki's Taisho(1912-1926)era trilogy. Strange and mysterious tale of a German language teacher, Fujita (director of many Nikkatsu juvenile delinquent movies as well as the two *Lady Snowblood* films) hooking up with his old friend, Harada, now a wanderer, after many years of being out-of-touch. Shortly thereafter, Fujita learns Harada has married a woman (Otani in a double role) who looks a lot like the geisha who entertained them that night. He begins to have irrational fears about Harada sleeping with his own wife (Okusu) after Harada deserts the pregnant Otani to go wandering with the lookalike geisha. There's much blurring of western and Japanese cultures as well as the line between the living and the dead. As with the next two films, there's also the blending of decadent art with the non-traditional ghost story. It won a prize at the Berlin Film Festival in 1981, and was voted best film of the 1980s by Japanese critics. Although I find it the best of the trilogy, none of the three are amongst my favorite Suzuki films. I feel that he revels too much in mysterious imagery at the expense of narrative coherence. Not that coherence is mandatory, especially in a film about the nature of personal mysteries. But the snaillike pacing and lack of dynamic tension such as that imposed by the Nikkatsu bosses' restrictions, produces a meandering, aimless sensation to all three films that I find very conducive to boredom. I don't know if David Lynch has ever seen a Suzuki film (I would assume he's at least heard of him). I know from an interview I did with Suzuki that *The Elephant Man* is the only film of Lynch's Suzuki has seen. If you took this trilogy of films and crossed them with the breakneck pacing and action of Suzuki's Nikkatsu pictures, you'd come up with movies not unlike Lynch's last and best four efforts (*Blue Velvet*, *Wild at Heart*, *Fire Walk With Me*, *and Lost Highway*). (Color) #1 of 3 (his 41st film) * * * VHS/LASER = Toho

1981 ***Heat Haze Theater*** (*Kageroza*) 139 min. w/ Yusaku Matsuda, Michiyo Okusu, Katsuo Nakamura, Yoshio Harada, Mariko Kaga, Ryutaro Otomo Another saga of blurred realities this time with a playwright (Matsuda) who realizes all of a sudden that the woman he's fallen-in-love with (Okusu, formerly known as Michiyo Yasuda and star of many yakuza and samurai films at Daiei in '60s) is his patron's (Nakamura) wife. It also turns out she's a dead ringer for Nakamura's deceased first spouse. Matsuda starts running into the dead wife, and emotional complications and mental derangements ensue. (Color) #2 of 3 films (his 42nd film) * * * VHS/LASER (Japan) = APORO

1985 ***Capone's Flood of Tears***(*Kapone Oi Ni Naku*) 128 min. w/ Kenichi Hagiwara, Kenji Sawada, Laurie Berri, Tatsuo Umemiya Incoherent comic surrealism that is probably Suzuki's most pretentious and disappointing film. Primarily a satire on gangster/ yakuza mores in the thirties as well as today, it misses the mark. It's flooded with an annoyingly upbeat music score, but there is some remarkable imagery at the end



Red Peony Gambler—Flower Card Match *Directed by Tai Kato*

with Hagiwara giving an alternately inspiring/ obnoxious performance singing a tortured Noh song before an audience of tourists on the street. Suzuki then focuses on a merciless satire of *harakiri*, positioning Hagiwara before a bank of funhouse mirrors w/ American actress, Berri, poised beside him with another sword, ready to lop off his head once he's done the act. However, she never does, and he wanders off after many protracted, exaggerated contortions, his sword hanging out of his belly.(Color)(his 43rd film) * * 1/2 VHS (Japan) = Shochiku

1991 ***Yumeji*** 128 min. w/ Kenji Sawada, Tomoko Mariya, Yoshio Harada, Tamasaburo Bando, Michiyo Okusu Final film in Suzuki's Taisho trilogy. It depicts the decadent existence of real-life painter/writer, Takehisa Yumeji, dealing with his dreamlike encounters and seductions. The borderline between the real and dream worlds is blurred with unnerving proficiency, and Yumeji finds himself dueling with the dead lover of his live woman. (his 44th film and last to date—as far as I know) # 3 of 3 (Color) * * * VHS (Japan) = Appollon

Tai Kato

Tai Kato is another case of not knowing that much beyond what I've picked-up from his films. He started work at Toho in 1937 as an assistant director of cinematography, then directed his first film, *Trouble With Swards, Trouble With Women* (*Kenan Jonan*) in 1951 for the newly formed Shintoho Studios, a mindblowing film that's so modern in style, framing, fast-pace/action and editing you'd almost swear it's from the late '60s. He started work at Toei in 1952, directing *Fear of the Devil From Port Shimizu* (*Shimizu Minato Ha Oni Yori Kowai*). However, he did do one more film for Shintoho called *Ninja Child—Orochimaru's Counterattack* (*Ninjutsu Ji -Gyakushu Orochi Maru*) ('SS), a project that is also one of Tomisaburo Wakaya.

Kato began to really hit his stride turning-out the first two films in writer, Renzaburo Shibata's *Genjikuro Sassoki* series in 1957-'58 w/ Kinnosuke Nakamura as the white-clad, two-sworded avenger. His first critically-acclaimed film was *The Wind, Women and Violent Travels*, (*Kaze To Onna To Tabi Gurasu*) ('58), a period yakuza story. He continued making kinetic, action-packed movies—samurai, ninja and *matatabi* (wandering samurai gambler) pictures—such films as *Mission to Hell* (*Kogan No Misshi*) ('59), *Chivalrous Child of Edo* (*O Edo No Kyoji*) ('60), *Throne of Flame* (*Honoo No Shiro* aka *Castle of Fire*) ('60), *Ghasts of Oiwa* (*Kaidan Oiwa No Borei*) ('61), *Long-Sought Mother* (*Mabuta No Haha*) ('62) (another film popular w/ critics), *Sasuke and His Comedians* (*Sanada Fuunroku*) ('63), *Samurai on the Wind* (*Kaze No Bushi aka Samurai Vagabond*) '64) all through the early sixties, then added the "*ninkyo* " yakuza genre (films set usually in the 1910-1930 period with chivalric sword-wielding heroes) to his "oeuvre" in 1965.

Some Tai Kato films: (from over 40 he directed)

1964 ***Cruelty of Shogunate's Downfall*** (*Bakumatsu Zankoku Monogatari*) 99 min. w/ Hashizo Okawa, Junko Fuji, Choichiro Kawarazaki, Isao Kimura, Ryohei Uchida, Ryutaro Otomo, Ko Nishimura My favorite Kato film. Probably the best film ever made about the notorious Shinsengumi (political Assassins' Group operating in 1860's Edo). There've been many, including the nearly-as-good f *Want to Die a Samurai* (*Shinsengumi Shimatsuki* or *Account of Shinsengumi Leaders*)('62) dir. Kenji Misumi w / Raizo Ichikawa & Tomisaburo Wakayama, *Dand of Assasins*



Red Peony Gambler—Oryu's Visit. *Directed by Tai Kato.*

(*Shinsengumi*) ('70) dir. Tadashi Sawashima w/ Toshiro Mifune, *The Last Samurai* (*Okami Yo Rakujitsu O Kire* or *Wolf Cuts Down The Sunset*) '74 dir. Kenji Misumi w/ Hideki Takahashi and THE LAST SWORDSMAN (*Okita Soji*) ('75) dir. Masanobu Deme w/ Masao Kusakari. This one, however, works on several levels. There's much extremely sick black humor as well as pathos with Okawa an intelligent, sensitive but nevertheless country-bumpkin samurai whose main ambition (God knows why! Probably related to the coldbloodedly macho self-image of most men at the time) is to join the notoriously violent Shinsengumi. When he is brought in with several other novices to witness wooden sword bouts between slightly more experienced members, the carnage is so revoltingly gory (as in real life) that he's continually having to restrain himself from puking his guts out. When a dead man spouting geysers of blood falls on him, he can no longer keep down his food and runs out to be sick. Of course, he's a laughing-stock henceforth for showing the most natural human emotions. Taunted by several other new men, he attempts *hara-kiri*, something that shocks his tormentors. Realizing he, in fact, has much heart, they rally to his aid. Okawa awakes to the care of the beautiful Fuji who will soon become the love of his life. Unfortunately Okawa steels himself to the brutality and is soon as nearly merciless as his assassin fellows. However he still gravitates to the more intelligent and introspective members (Kimura, Kawarazaki). Fuji is his one link with the sanity of gentleness, love and humanity. Once he sees his book-worm friend (Kimura) killed by other members, then the one comparatively sane leader (Otomo) assassinated by his fellow bosses, Okawa makes plans with Fuji to escape the compound and live in peace. But the others have gotten wind of his plan and call him on the carpet before the head honcho. Okawa soon sees his only choice is to pull his sword and try to fight his way out. He manages to wound scores of men. Although he's a lousy swordsman, he's so possessed with demonic rage it takes forever for the men to kill him. The final fatal blow to the throat is bestowed by his other friend, Kawarazaki. As he dies in a narrow, blood-drenched alley, the hysterically weeping Fuji reaches out to touch his outstretched red fingers. Their flesh brushes together, and then he's gone. Last shot is of the no longer stoic Kawarazaki alone in the main room of the leader's lair. The tormented expression on his face betrays an awakening to the futility of the group's fascist mentality, and he lashes out with his sword, cutting-in-half the Shinsengumi's slogan banner that hangs on the wall. (B&W) * * * * (Not out-on-video—I saw a letterboxed tape off of Japanese cable courtesy of Yoshiki Hayashi)



Gate of Flesh. *Directed by Seijun Suzuki*

1965 ***Tale of Meiji Era Chivalry—Third in Succession*** or *Third Generation's Rise to Fame* (*Meiji Kyokakuden +Sandaime Shumei* aka *Blood Of Revenge*) 91 min. w/ Koji Tsuruta, Junko Fuji, Tetsuro Tanba, Toru Abe, Hiromi Fujiyama, Minoru Oki, Masahiko Tsugawa A tale set in the late Meiji era—circa turn-of-century as opposed to early Meiji (which began in 1860's with Tokugawa shogunate's downfall). One of Kato's best "middle period" films—films he did between 1964-1971. It has all the standard necessary elements for a dramatically successful "*ninkyo*" (chivalrous) picture but, with its passionate convictions, with one of Tsuruta's most heartfelt performances, with the integration of period detail and the choreography of violence and movement, it rises to another plateau occupied by very few films.

The brutally violent climax when fearless Tsuruta jumps from a moving train through the window of the "evil" clan's HQ, immediately running villain, Oki, through with his sword is one of the most intense, economically pared-to-the-bone action sequences in any yakuza film. The camera follows Tsuruta as he eludes the panicking cops, pursuing Abe, his other nemesis. Abe heads straight for Fuji's house—Tsuruta and he had been rivals for her affections—and when Tsuruta catches up he kills Abe right in front of the terrified Fuji. The police immediately arrive to haul him away. Fuji runs after them, embracing Tsuruta's chained form, rubbing her face against his bare tattooed and bloodstained chest. This is one of the most cathartic moments in any of Kato's films since romance earlier in the saga had been somewhat suppressed to reflect Meiji era social conventions. Like his Toei colleague, Kosaku Yamashita, Kato restrains certain histrionic elements and accentuates others—he has the taste, the visual and dramatic intuition to create sublimely transcendent cinematic ritual out of the most commonplace elements. By the way, this movie bears no relation in either story or character to director, Shigehiro Ozawa's *Third in Succession* (*Sandaime Shumei*) ('74) w/ Ken Takakura. (Color) * * * * VHS (Japan) = Toei

1966 ***Tokijiro Kutsukake—Lone Yakuza*** (*Kutsukake Tokijiro -Yukyo Ippiki*) 91 min. w/ Kinnosuke Nakamura, Junko Ikeuchi, Chiyonosuke Azuma, Kiyoshi Atsumi, Yoko Mihara Probably the best version of this oft-filmed *matatabi* tale. Nakamura is Tokijiro, a brooding, ambivalent samurai gambler who is nevertheless tormented every time he kills a man. Atsumi (star of the *Tora San* series) is his magpie-like sidekick who never shuts up. Before long, Nakamura inadvertently becomes responsible for Ikeuchi and her child when he kills her husband in a gangfight. When he does this, the gang he'd temporarily become allied with turns into his enemy. He slowly comes to realize that this is a turning point in his life, and he has a chance to redeem some of his past misdeeds as well as turn over a new leaf and lay down his sword. Unfortunately, Ikeuchi is killed, and he must adopt her boy as his own. This could easily turn into sentimental glop. It's a testament to Kato's integrity that he refuses to sink to contrivances to manipulate audience emotions. Full of beautiful images and deceptively powerful flashbacks, Nakamura contemplating his past violence with mixed feelings. (Color) * * * 1/2 (Toei Studio) (No Video) (I saw beautiful, uncut letterbox copy taped off of Japanese cable TV/courtesy Yoshiki Hayashi)

1966 ***History of a Man's Face*** (*Otoka No Kao Ha Rirekisho*) 89 min. w/ Noboru Ando. Ichiro Nakatani, Sanae Nakahara, Kanjuro Arashi, Ryohei Uchida, Tomiko Ishii Extremely intense, economic melodrama of a doctor (Ando) in an outlying rural community being confronted with a person from his past. A shooting victim is brought into Ando's small clinic, and he recognizes the fellow (Nakatani) as a gangster who'd run off with his lover. Nakatani and the woman are now married with a little child. Ando goes into a flashback reverie as Nakatani is prepped for the operation. Ando's feelings are confused, divided into friendship and loathing. Despite his rough and sometimes cruel demeanor, Nakatani was the only comparatively "decent" person strong enough to help Ando fight and ultimately destroy the evil gang of hoodlums that ruled over the small town. A gang that Nakatani, himself, belonged to. Led by Uchida, the gang was always able to either bribe or pull the wool over the eyes of the police whenever they made stops in the community. Since it was immediately post-WW2, there wasn't a permanent police force stationed in their village yet. After the final massacre, Nakatani had run off with the doctor's woman (his nurse), leaving him to face arrest and apparently a brief jail term all alone. Has some very intense performances and truly grueling action scenes, something not that common in most Shochiku yakuza films (Color) * * * 1/2 VHS (Japan) = Shochiku

(continued)

1967 ***Eighteen-Year Jail Term*** (*Choeki Ju Hachi Nen*)91 min. w/ Noboru Ando, Asao Koike, Hiroko Sakuramachi, Tomisaburo Wakayama, Shinobu Chihara, Masaomi Kondo, Shingo Yamashiro, Hosei Komatsu, Kin Sugai Ando and Koike are just returning soldiers in post-WW2 Japan who, because of the abject poverty, food shortages, disillusionment-turned-to-nihilism, form the routine criminal enterprises. They come in conflict with the already established yakuza black marketeers and the blood starts spilling. Although marked by Kato's always insightful, tasteful, yet vigorously violent direction, it's not one of his very best. Still, Ando, a former yakuza himself (where do you think he got that incredibly long scar down his left cheek?) and Koike are their usual stoic, excellent selves, and writer, Kazuo Kasahara (he wrote much of Fukasaku's *Battle Without Honor and Humanity* series)'s ironic, dry uncompromising intelligence shines through. (Color) * * * #1 of 2 films (Yasuo Furuhata directed a sequel, *Parole From an Eighteen-Year Term* (*Choeki Ju Hachi Nen Kari Shutsu Goku*) w/ Ando, Wakayama and Juzo Itami that same year). VHS (Japan) = Toei

1968 ***I, THE EXECUTIONER*** (*Minagoroshi No Retka aka Song Of Massacre*) 91 min. w/ Makoto Sato, Chieko Baisho, Ying Lan-Fang, Sanae Nakahara, Toshiko Sawa, Kin Sugai, Yuki Kawamura Only tangentially a yakuza film. Hitman, Sato, seeks vengeance, killing one-by-one the predatory women who drove his mentally unstable best friend to suicide. (B&W) VHS (Japan) = Shochiku

1969 ***Red Peony Gambler—Flower Cards Match*** - (*Hibotan Bakuto -Hana Fuda Shobu*) 98 min. w/ Junko Fuji, Ken Takakura, Tomisaburo Wakayama, Kyosuke Machida, Kanjuro Arashi, Asao Koike, Bin Amatsu Moody continuation of Oryu, the Red Peony Gambler's saga She's an independent yakuza boss, traveling from town to town on adventures in 1920s Japan. Her father had been a benevolent *oyabun* (boss) murdered by villains in the first Red Peony film. Ever since she seems to fall into situations that require her to fight injustice. The film begins with her saving a blind girl from the path of an onrushing train. Subsequently, she discovers the girl's mother is also a gambler *impersonating her, Oryu*. and she ends up rescuing the imposter from villain(Koike) clan's gambling den. A lone wolf (Takakura) obligated to the bad guys shows up and is made an offer he can't refuse—challenge the elderly *oyabun*(Arashi) of the clan Oryu is staying with to a death match. This effectively ends up being a fatal duel. Arashi is mortally wounded although he doesn't die for a few days, and still insists on carrying on clan functions as usual. The injustices are piling up, and when Oryu, at last, goes to Koike's HQ for satisfaction, Takakura, who's had as much as a just man can take, fights by her side. They cut down the villains with knife and sword. The love between the two that might've been, is, as always, chaste, awkwardly romantic in a poetically minamalist way, and, because of their differing obligations, *will never* be consummated. (Color) #3 of B films * * * 1/2 VHS (Japan) = Toei

1970 ***Red Peony Gambler—Oryu's Visit*** (*Hibotan Bakuto -Oryu Sanjo* aka *This Is Oryu*) 99 min. w/ Junko Fuji, Bunta Sugawara, Akio Hasegawa, Tomisaburo Wakayama, Kanjuro Arashi, Toru Abe, Hiroshi Nawa, Bin Amatsu Oryu visits



Graveyard of Honor and Humanity.
Directed by Kinji Fukasaku



Asakusa, staying with a theatrical troupe run by decent boss, Arashi. Abe and Nawa are the villains trying to take over the theater (which is very popular, thus profitable). They trick a bitter actress who has been sacked into luring Arashi to a deserted square. The whole gang of bad guys then ventilates him with their swords This is about halfway through the story, and from then on the action barely lets up. At the *sakazuki* ceremony of yakuza bosses being held to decide on who'll take over Arashi's territory, Oryu gets in a confrontation with Abe and his men. They actually come at her with their swords She manages to hold them off with her judo.

Suddenly, Wakayama appears in one of the most bizarre entrances of any film. He's clad in black tie and tails, top hat, Charlie Chaplin moustache and is basically akin to Oryu's country cousin, a comical bumpkin who, nevertheless, is a judo expert as well as proficient at gun and swordplay. He terrorizes Abe and cohorts and even coerces Abe to cut off his pinkie to apologize to Oryu. While Oryu sees him off out in the countryside, Hasegawa has gone to Abe's HQ to retrieve a young actress who has been kidnapped. Abe is hoping to thus extort possession of the theater from the weak-willed owner. However, Oryu unexpectedly arrives. She's too late to save Hasegawa, who has been stabbed to death, but she hustles the girl and owner out while holding the villains at bay. Making a run for it herself, she bumps into Sugawara, a quiet and honorable friend who likewise has a beef with the bad guys. They return to villain HQ together and proceed to engage in one of the most brutal swordfights in any Toei yakuza film. The fact that it takes place in the tower of the scoundrels' compound visually augments the strife, plying a feverishly hypnotic spell on the viewer as the two slash their way up from floor-to-floor. There's an unusual highlight when Nawa is about to draw his gun on Oryu, and she beats him to it, drawing *her* pistol from behind her back and killing *him* . Finally, with all badmen dead and both Oryu and Sugawara wounded, him seriously so, they pause in bloody reverie on the roof of the tower. (Color) #6 of B films * * * * VHS (Japan) = Toei

1971 ***Red Peony Gambler—Death to the Wicked*** (*Hibotan Bakuto -O Inochi Itadakimasu*) 93 min. w/ Junko Fuji, Koji Tsuruta, Tomisaburo Wakayama, Minoru Oki, Kyosuke Machida, Seizaburo Kawazu Visiting another rural village brings Oryu into contact with Tsuruta's clan, a group allied closely to the common people—farmers and factory workers. When Oryu arrives at the clan house, no one's at home. She's inadvertently picked the date of a labor dispute with the local factory management, a factory that is also emptying its pollution runoff on fertile land. Tsuruta finally arrives home but only with the help of his friends. He's been savagely beaten in the corporate office by a military martinet(Oki) abusing his power, helping factory management and another "evil" yakuza clan to arrest demonstrators. Before you can blink, boss Tsuruta's been assassinated. Oryu returns from a gambling sojourn in a nearby town to attend the funeral and avenge the wrongs being done by military man, Oki, and villainous yakuza boss, Kawazu. The final fight between Fuji and Kawazu, after she and friend, Machida have obliterated the whole nefarious clan, is an occasion to see Oryu at her most vulnerable. Her hair is down, her kimono ripped to reveal her tattoo, her arm bleeding. Once she's run Kawazu through with her knife, the sky darkens with clouds, then goes white with lightning, She pauses in the polluted creek where she's dispatched the villain, then reels in shame as Tsuruta's tiny son runs up with a picture of her that he's drawn. She's mortally ashamed of her unabashed bloody and criminal appearance—she puts one hand over her arm to hide her blood-stained, tattooed flesh, and tells the boy to go back. He refuses, running to her, and she's forced to embrace him to keep him from looking at her. You don't think much else can happen, then Kato

inserts an emotionally draining scene like this that lays bare the duality of his character, the hell that Oryu lives in as a woman destined, because of her gambler's life, to never have children of her own and to always see the kindest men she meets cut down by the evil, less principled monsters of the yakuza underworld. (Color) #7 of 8 films **** VHS (Japan) = Toei

1972 *Showa Woman Gambler* (*Showa Onna Bakuto*) 91 min. w/ Kyoko Enami, Hiroki Matsukata, Kanjuro Arashi, Shigeru Amachi, Junko Matsuhei (For more on this film info see *Cult Movies* #15 on *Swordswomen* ("Samurai Film—A Neglected Genre") (Toei Studios) (No Video)

In 1972, with films he directed for Shochiku and Toho, Kato seemed to begin his "epic" period. Most of these more recent pictures ran somewhere between 130-140 minutes. The only film I've seen from this time, *Miyamoto Musashi* (*Musashi Miyamoto* aka *The two-part Sword Of Fury*) (1973) w/ Hideki Takahashi, is good but has some liabilities. Although the performances and rhythm of action are on the money, Kato employs a constant camera angle/viewpoint almost-level-with-the-ground & looking-up that I felt accomplished nothing but draw attention to itself. While I understand he was going for a somewhat Zen POV to stress man's humble origins and place in the world, I felt the effect ssometimes annoyingly pretentious. He's used this viewpoint in most of his films, but the effect is much more tempered in his earlier efforts—something which I think makes it more effective. The other films from this period such as *Theater of Life* (*Jinsei Gekijo*, '72), *Flower and Dragon* (*Hana To Ryu*, '73) and *Tale of Flower of Japanese Chivalry* (*Nihon Kyoka Den*, '73), all epic-length "*ninkyo*" (chivalrous) yakuza sagas, are apparently the films Paul Schrader had in mind when he compared Kato to Sergio Leone in a 1976 *Film Comment* article on yakuza genre films. I haven't seen these films, but from the stills I've glimpsed I'd say they look incredibly exciting. In the last few years, a number of Japanese critics have expressed renewed interest in Kato's cinematic output. In the Fall of 1994, Tokyo was the sight of the first major retrospective of his work. Kato died in 1985 at age 69.



Kanto Wanderer *Directed by Seijun Suzuki*

Well, that's it. Unfortunately, there are some of the aforementioned directors' films I have not seen (especially those of Masumura). I've paraphrased synopses I've found in various sources such as *Uni Japan Film Monthly*, Pacific Film Archive catalog (of their Daiei film prints), David Desser's *Eros + Massacre* book, program notes by Tony Rayns for the ICA British *Suzuki* retrospective and Ian Buruma for the Dutch Rotterdam *Suzuki* retrospective, David Chute's "Branded to Thrill" article in *Film Comment*, etc., for those applicable. Also quite a few of the reviews for yakuza and crime/action pictures are from my almost-finished book *Yakuza Eiga A Complete Encyclopedia of Japanese Gangster Films*.■

VIDEO TAPES STATEMENT OF AGE REQ.

All tapes are 2 hours - $17.50 each. Postage included.

G. KELLEY

P.O. Box 604-T, Estacada, OR 97023

SEE YOUR FAVORITE STARS IN ACTION SCENES

NAKED WOMEN OF TV #1 - Includes stars of Partridge Family, Newhart, Three's Company, All in the Family, Mad About You, and more! 28 Stars.

NAKED WOMEN OF TV #2 - Includes stars of Growing Pains, Hogan Family, Dukes of Hazzard, Moonlighting, Police Woman, Gilligan's Island, Brady Bunch, Silk Stalkings, and more! 30 Stars.

NAKED WOMEN OF TV #3 - Growing Pains, Nancy Drew, Cosby Show, Flying Nun, Wiseguy, Wheel of Fortune, Who's The Boss, Home Court, Friends and more! 2S stars.

NAKED WOMEN OF SCI-FI #1 - Addams Family, Blakes Seven, VRS, Galactica, Land of Giants, Star Trek, Highlander TV, Babylon S, V The Series, Supergirl and more! 29 stars.

NAKED WOMEN OF SCI-FI #2 - Alien Nation Deep Space 9, Seaquest, Lost in Space, Batman TV, The Immortal, Elvira, Star Trek N.G. and more! 30 stars.

NAKED WOMEN OF SCI-FI #3 - Superboy, Weird Science, Earth 2, Tek War, Man and Machine, Strange Luck, Space Project, Beauty and Beast, Wonder Woman, much more! 28 stars.

NAKED WOMEN OF TREK #1 - Some regular cast and some guest stars of: original Star Trek, Deep Space Nine, and Next Generation as you always wanted to see them! 2S stars!

NAKED WOMEN OF TV #4 - Clueless, Renegade, Caroline in City, Ink, Petticoat Junction, Picket Fences, Almost Perfect, Faulty Towers, Family Ties, Different Strokes. 32 stars!

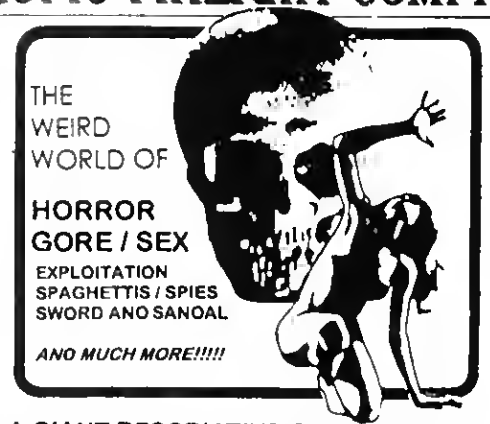
YOUR

SUPER SOURCE

FOR

video

TROPIC TWILIGHT COMPANY



FOR A GIANT DESCRIPTIVE CATALOG SEND $3 TO

TROPIC TWILIGHT COMPANY

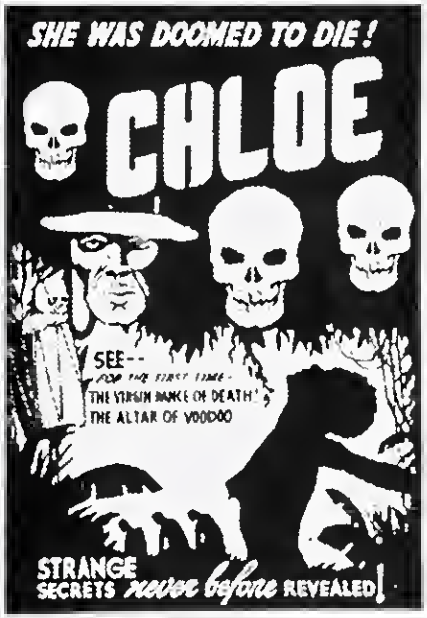
1142 AUAHI ST. SUITE 3203

HONOLULU, HI 96814

THOUSANDS OF TITLES!!!



Check out the Sinister Cinema catalog on the Internet. http://www.cinemaweb.com/sinister



CHLOE* (1934) Olive ... an Reed Howes Molly O'Day This is one of the most remarkable low-budget '30s films we have ever come across It can be broadly described as a romantic voodoo jungle thriller A gnarled, old black voodoo mistress from the Everglades comes out of the swamp to seek revenge on the white plantation lord she believes responsible for the death of her husband 15 years earlier Her daughter, Chloe (who could easily pass for white) finds herself torn between a black man and a handsome white foreman Suddenly evidence surfaces that Chloe may actually be the plantation lord's long lost daughter Is she? A frenzied, realistic sacrificial voodoo ceremony highlights the climax of this wonderful film that weaves its way through an atmosphere of swamp shacks, alligators, voodoo dolls, snakes, bats and cypress trees It reeks with atmosphere The aspect of interracial romance on screen was unheard of for its time A charmingly lyrical orchestral score underlies most of the film and adds a flavor that's strikingly similar to WHITE ZOMBIE CHLOE is a crude film in some ways, yet this adds to an overall moody charm that has seldom if ever been achieved by another film of such obvious low budget trappings A fascinating piece of rare cinema 16mm H245

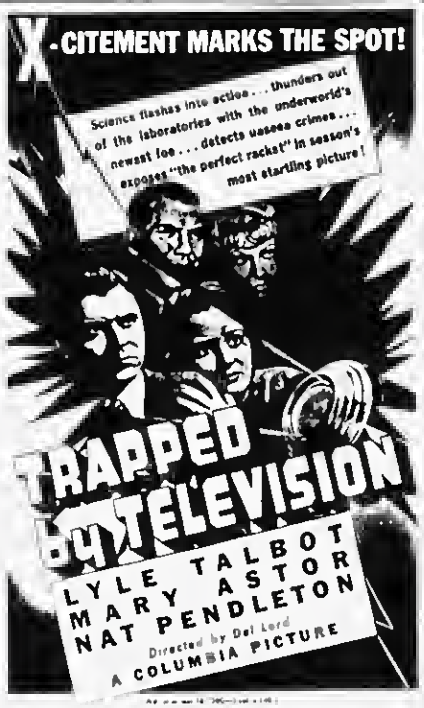
DIE, MONSTER, DIE (1965) Boris Karloff, Nick Adams, Suzan Farmer, Freda Jackson An AIP classic! Karloff plays the lord of a strange manor around which all life--plant and animal--seem to be mutating into hideous monstrosities Adams is the meddling American who has come to rescue Boris' daughter He discovers a large radioactive meteorite in the cellar Based on the H.P. Lovecraft classic "The Colour Out of Space." NOTE This is the original HBO pre-record that is no longer available in stores Its recorded at SP We have a limited quantity, so order now Color, from 35mm H247

DAUGHTER OF THE NIGHT* (1921) Bela Lugosi, Lee Perry, Violette Napierska A lost Lugosi film finally surfaces! Bela looks absolutely wonderful and has a meaty role in this silent espionage drama He plays a French aristocrat that falls for a Russian club singer Watch out though, she's secretly involved--in a big, big way--with an underground Russian revolutionary movement She eventually entices Bela to aid her cause Unfortunately, Bela's recently jilted girlfriend just happens to be a top Russian spy! Very interesting and surprisingly well-done Known outside the U.S. as "Dance on the Volcano." Our thanks to Gary Rhodes for making this forgotten Lugosi classic available again Music score 16mm ST44

AND THE WILD, WILD WOMEN* (1960) Anna Magnani, Giuliete Masina One of the most famous women's prison exploitation films ever made starring two of Italy's top stars A harsh study about the grim realities of life in a non-coed, totally female prison environment Story concerns a young girl who comes to prison and experiences the entire prison subculture The inmates she befriends vary from big tough dangerous dames to smaller submissive ladies who are totally lost in prison life and stuck at the end of the prison pecking order She eventually leaves prison while her fellow inmates remain, but comes back later to visit, showing that she is a true friend One intriguing plot device is a particular cell bathroom where inmates go at certain times to see loved ones on the outside by holding up a mirror at a certain angle Very explosive, yet still a fascinating look at women's prison life Three stars by Leonard Maltin 16mm X087

CURSE OF THE WRAYDONS* (1946) Tod Slaughter, Bruce Seton, Andrew Laurence Tod's at it again as a mad spy who goes around the countryside strangling just about everybody he can get his hands on Set in the early 1800s, his evil scheme is to destroy all the members of a family who once wronged him He has a secret lab complete with a torture chamber that's highlighted in the film's frenzied climax This is without a doubt the most over the top, leering, sneering, insidious laughing, totally looney tunes performance Tod ever gave A pure horror melodrame from start to finish This film is a little long-winded at times (92 minutes), but it's definitely worth it for the numerous horror scenes of Tod doing his schtick There are a couple of scenes where he goes absolutely bonkers 35mm H246

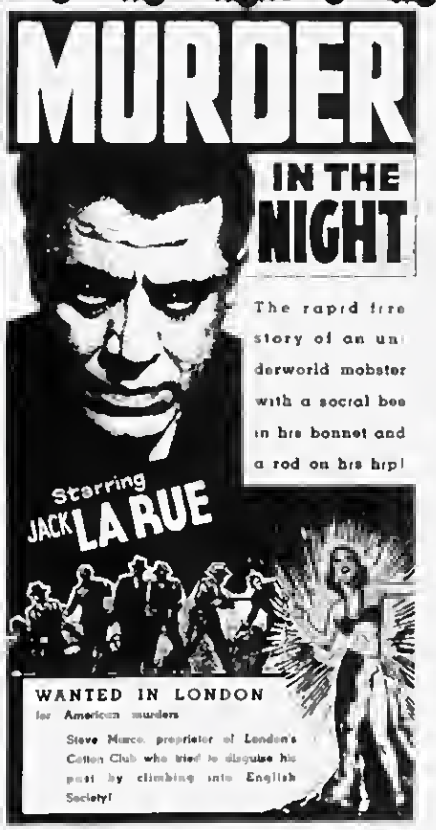




TRAPPED BY TELEVISION* (1936) Mary Astor, Lyle Talbot, Nat Pendleton, Joyce Compton A real testy! A young tele-vision inventor seeks financial backing for his research He finds himself involved with a crooked businessman and a group of thugs who attempt to steal his invention! Science fiction for its time, this lively Columbia "B" film is quick, slick and a lot of fun 35mm S207

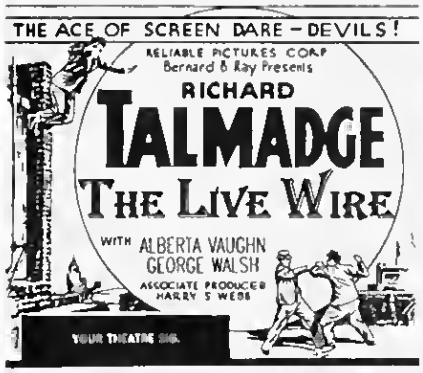
ULYSSES AGAINST THE SON OF HERCULES* (1963) Georges Marchal, Michael Lane, Alessandra Panaro, Yvette Lebon During an exciting sea battle Hercules captures Ulysses However, both are soon captured by weird creatures, half-man, half-bird Our heroes try to escape, but eventually find themselves pitted against the creatures' master, a beautiful, yet evil queen This is probably the rarest of the Sons of Hercules films Color, 16mm S597

WETBACKS* (1956) Lloyd Bridges, Nancy Gates, John Hoyt, Barton MacLane The script is a little flakey, but a great cast helps out this exciting B thriller about a down-on-his-luck fisherman (Bridges) who takes out a tough guy (MacLane) and a dangerous dame (Gates) on a fishing charter, only to have them skip out without paying at the end of the cruise Lloyd's then stuck in a small Mexican fishing village (along with Gates, who it turns out also got ditched) with no money and no gas to get home He's then forced by Hoyt--at gunpoint--to run illegal aliens over the border A cool drive-in movie $12.95 plus $2.05 for packaging, handling and postage From 16mm M279



MURDER IN SOHO* (1939 aka **MURDER IN THE NIGHT**) Jack LaRue, Sandra Storme, Bernard Lee, Google Withers. One of the slickest B merder mysteries we've seen in quite a while. LaRue (who looks like a cross between Bogart and Edward G. Robinson) is the gangster owner of a slick nightclub. In his office, he guns down one of his operatives in cold blood! His cohorts then dump the body outside to make it look like a street killing. His moll--who is wise to the killing--is jealous of a new singer Jack has his eye on. Will she spill the beans on him? Can Jack outwit the cops? This is one of those nifty B films where all the gals are gorgeous and all the guys are dressed in tuxedos. Lots of big band songs help compliment a real '30s nightclub party atmosphere. A cool, cool movie. **$12.95** plus $2.05 for packaging, handling and postage. From 16mm. **M273**

THE SUN SETS AT DAWN (1950) Walter Reed, Phillip Shawn, Sally Parr. A true story about a young man railroaded to the death house. A smart reporter sent to cover the execution figures out who the real killer is, but can he get word to the warden in time? The state's brand new electric chair is revved up and ready to go. An amazing ending, considering it's all true. Not an action-packed film, but very engrossing with a literate, well acted script. Winner of the Cosmopolitan Magazine movie citation. Recommended! **$12.95** plus $2.05 for packaging, handling and postage. From 16mm. **M276**



THE LIVE WIRE* (1935) Dick Talmadge, Alberta Vaughn, George Walsh. Dick is a sailor who finds an ancient vase on an uncharted island. Later, he is employed by two archeologists to lead them back to the island. There they discover the skeleton-laiden temples of a lost civilization. Things are further complicated by a mutinous crew. As usual for a Talmadge film, there are tons of fisticuffs! The temple shots were filmed on Universal's horror sets (looks a lot like Frankenstein's and Dracula's castles). **$12.95** plus $2.05 for packaging, handling and postage. From 16mm. **AA06**

A NIGHT OF MAGIC* (1944) Robert Griffith, Marian Olive, Billy Scott. Oh my god! IT'S ANOTHER MUMMY MOVIE! Well, sort of. A British playboy, who just happens to be in possession of a 3000-year old sarcophagus (it's sitting in his mansion living room), discovers there's a 3000-year old Egyptian princess inside--alive! She pops out one evening and the two of them go out on the town for an unintelligible night of romance and song. This is--to say the least--one of the most oddball musical fantasies we've ever seen. 16mm. **F025**

QUATERMASS CONCLUSION (1979) John Mills, Barbara Kellerman, Simon MacCorkindale. A British scientist is called out of retirement to help the military stop a death ray from outer space that's ravaging the Earth. The final chapter--so far--to the Quatermass series. Recommended. NOTE: This is the original HBO pre-record that's no longer available in stores. It's recorded at SP and runs 105min. We have a limited quantity so order now. Color, 35mm. **S212**



THOROUGHBRED (1935) Toby Wing, Wheeler Oakman, Kenne Duncan. This is Toby's only starring role. She is the cutest girl who ever stepped in front of a camera (you might remember her from the "Young and Healthy" number in 42ND STREET). The plot has Kenne as an out-of-work reporter who wins an unknown horse in a dice game. Horse turns out to be very fast. Toby helps Kenne get into professional racing, but the two of them run up against race fixer Oakman. Worth the price of the tape just to marvel at Toby's incredible bleached-blonde cuteness. **$12.95** plus $2.05 for packaging, handling and postage. From a gorgeous 16mm print. **AA07**

THE CRIMSON CULT (1967 aka **THE CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR**) Boris Karloff, Christopher Lee, Barbara Steele, Mark Eden, Michael Gough. Lee is the wicked master of the sinister Graymarsh Lodge. Steele, as the green-skinned reincarnation of an ancient witch, is his supernatural cohort. Karloff is the occult expert who helps lead a fight against their evil conspiracy. Please be aware that this is the British edition of this AIP classic, featuring "R" rated footage and an alternate music score not featured in the original American theatrical and TV releases. NOTE: This is the original HBO pre-record that's no longer available in stores. It's recorded at SP. We have a limited quantity so order now. Color, 35mm. **H259**





LISA AND THE DEVIL* (1966) Telly Savalas, Elke Sommer, directed by Mario Bava. Upon this film's original release, scenes were added with Robert Alda as an exorcising priest. It was then released as HOUSE OF EXCORCISM. Many critics felt this new footage ruined what was one of Bava's very best films. Here now, is the original Bava cut print to the additional scenes. It's a magnificent film about a beautiful young woman (Sommer) stranded with with a devil-like character (Savalls) in a creepy, isolated mansion. There she discovers that she is the look-a-like for the evil owner's unfaithful, deceased mistress whose corpse still lies rotting in bed in a secret room. There is an overwhelming sense of morbid necrophilia present throughout the film as Bava's camera caresses long, lush draperies and putrid corpses, highlighted by atmospheric exterior night shots that reek with an atmospheric feeling of impending horror. If you love Italian horror you should see this classic. Color, from 16mm. **H254**

POISON IVY* (1953) Eddie Constantine, Howard Vernon. A rousing action movie that could be Eddie's best film next to ALPHAVILLE. As a tough federal agent, Eddie's up to his badge in everything from gold smuggling to shark-infested waters. Set in atmospheric Casablanca, this intrigue thriller has a distinct flavor not usually found in Eddie's other spy films. Recommended. 16mm. **SP29**

RADIO CAB MURDER* (1954) Jimmy Hanley, Lana Morris, Jack Allen. A remarkably well done British thriller. A man is found murdered in an automobile. The police then enlist the aid of an ex-safecracker who infiltrates the gang responsible. An intricate bank robbery plan is on their agenda in this quality crime film that has much more action and far less talk than most British thrillers. In the end the villains die in a particularly grisly manner. Very suspenseful! **$12.95** plus $2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. From 16mm. **M277**



ASSIGNMENT TERROR (1969 aka **DRACULA VS FRANKENSTEIN**) Michael Rennie, Paul Naschy, Karin Dor. Rennie plays an alien mad scientist whose race is hellbent on conquering the Earth. His mission is to revive Earth's legendary monsters (they will assist him in the invasion). From a castle in Transylvania he carries out this insane scheme. His grisly lineup of creatures is incredible. Frankenstein, Dracula, the Werewolf (Naschy), and the Mummy. He also revives a couple of dead scientists to help him in the lab. Things start to unravel when the werewolf falls for one of his aides (Dor). Not a classic, but still good fun and worth having in your collection. From a stunningly beautiful color print. NOTE: Please don't confuse this film's alternate title with the Sam Sherman/AI Adamson drive-in classic of the same name with Lon Chaney and J. Carrol Naish. **H210**

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!
Save BIG on our...

"LUCKY 7 SALE!"

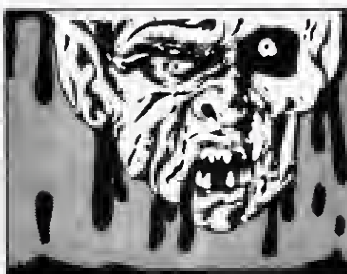
Buy any six titles from either of these two pages and receive the seventh title...

ABSOLUTELY FREE!

Sale ends at midnight, 12/31/97, so ORDER NOW!
Sale price does not apply to accumulative purchases.

For more incredible Sinister Cinema titles, go on to the next page.

(continued)



Sinister CINEMA PRESENTS

The Leading Source Of Horror, Mystery And Science Fiction On Video.
P.O. Box 4369
Dept. C
Medford, OR
97501-0168

58 GIFT IDEAS FOR 1997/1998

$16.95 each unless otherwise noted

Please add $2.05 per title for packaging. Please specify item number when ordering.

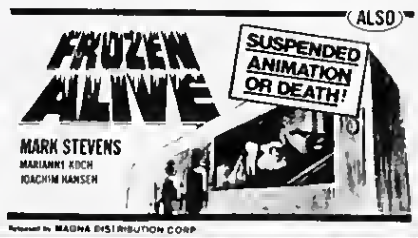
1. Please specify item number when ordering
2. Allow 2-5 weeks for delivery
3. Foreign residents please add appropriate extra postage (Sorry available only in NTSC)
4. Add $1 service charge on all orders not paid with check or money orders
5. Titles followed by an asterisk (*) have optional color custom boxes available at a charge of 50¢ per title

Make all checks and money orders payable to:
Sinister Cinema
P.O. Box 4369, Dept. C, Medford, OR 97501-0168
To place an order or for more info call 541-773-6860; FAX 779-8650

Check out the Sinister Cinema catalog on the Internet.
http://www.cinemaweb.com/sinister

Here are 58 films for your holiday and post-holiday gift shopping. Some are quite rare. *Chloe* is an excellent choice for anyone with a taste for obscure horror. There are a lot of forgotten gems in our mystery and adventure sections this year. Titles like *Wetbacks, Radio Cab Murder, The Sun Sets at Dawn, Murder in Soho, Flying Blind, Thoroughbred* and *The Live Wire* are all entertaining little B films with a lot going for them. There are many good titles in the other genres, as well. *Trapped by Television, Curse of the Wraydons, Lisa and the Devil, Ulysses Against the Son of Hercules, Poison Ivy, And the Wild Wild Women* and *Assignment Terror* are just a few examples. Enjoy!

PLEASE NOTE: *Planet of the Vampires, Die Monster Die, The Quatermass Conclusion, The Crimson Cult, Cry of the Banshee, Tomb of Ligeia, The Oblong Box* and *The Conqueror Worm* are all original HBO pre-recorded tapes and entire the current Orion pre-recorded versions that are widely distributed in the EP mode. These are all recorded at SP. IMPORTANT!!! Three of these titles, *Die Monster Die, The Quatermass Conclusion* and *The Crimson Cult* are no longer available in stores. Quantities are limited, so order now.



Released by MAGNA DISTRIBUTION CORP.

SCIENCE FICTION

TRAPPED BY TELEVISION* (1936) Mary Astor, Lyle Talbot, Nat Pendleton, Joyce Compton, Thurston Hall. A real rarity! A young television inventor seeks financial backing for his research. He finds himself involved with a crooked businessman and a group of thugs who attempt to steal his invention! Science fiction for its time, this lively Columbia "B" film is quick, slick and a lot of fun. 35mm **S207**

DICK TRACY (1937) Ralph Byrd, Kay Hughes, Smiley Burnette. A very well-edited condensation of one of the greatest sci fi/crime serials ever made. It's Dick against his own brother Gordon who's under the hypnotic control of a master criminal known as the Spider! Don't like wading through entire serials? This ones for you. BUY IT! They don't make 'em much better than this. A nice 16mm print. **S208**

ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS (1957) Richard Garland, Pamela Duncan, Russell Johnson. One of the greatest "B" sci-fi movies ever made. A research team gets stranded on a small island recently exposed to fall-out from an H-bomb test. All animal life has been destroyed except for seagulls and crabs. Unfortunately the crabs have mutated into giant monsters and are literally dissecting the island in search of their human prey. Great fun! From 35mm. **S202**

FROZEN ALIVE (1964) Mark Stevens, Marianne Koch. An interesting and unusual sci-fi thriller. Stevens plays a scientist experimenting with suspended animation. After experimenting with animals he decides to be his own Guinea pig. While he's on ice his wife is murdered! When he's being unthawed it is established that he's the prime suspect. Who is guilty? Some cool lab scenes. 16mm **S111**

LAST MAN ON EARTH* (1964) Vincent Price, Franca Bettoia, Emma Danieli. Top notch science fiction. A plague has killed off most of the earth's population and Price is the sole survivor. The other inhabitants are mutant vampires that Price stakes by day and battles each night. Compelling and chilling sci-fi. From 35mm. **S144**

PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES (1965) Barry Sullivan, Norma Bangell; directed by Mario Bava. Weird things start to happen when a spaceship makes a forced landing on a strange, misty planet. The crew members start going berserk. They eventually find themselves being taken over by disembodied alien vampires. A beautiful film to look at; one of Bava's best...a '60s sci-fi classic. Color. 35mm **S209**



ASSIGNMENT TERROR (1969 aka DRACULA VS FRANKENSTEIN) Michael Rennie, Paul Naschy, Karin Dor. Rennie is an alien mad scientist whose face is out to conquer Earth. From a castle in Transylvania he revives legendary monsters to help carry out this insane scheme. Frankenstein, Dracula, the Werewolf (Naschy) and the Mummy are all on hand. Things start to unravel when the werewolf falls for one of his aides (Dor). From a stunning color print. NOTE: Please don't confuse this film's alternate title with the Sam Sherman/Al Adamson directed classic of the same name. **S210**

EYES BEHIND THE STARS (1972) Martin Balsam, Natalie Delon. A photographer and his model are out in a creepy forest when they suddenly feel like they're being watched. They flee. Later, when the pictures are developed, aliens are seen! Color. 16mm **S211**

QUATERMASS CONCLUSION (1979) John Mills, Barbara Kellerman, Simon MacCorkindale. A British scientist is called out of retirement to help the military stop a death ray from outer space that is ravaging the Earth. The final chapter--so far--to the Quatermass series. Recommended. NOTE: This is the original HBO pre-record that's no longer available in stores. It's recorded at SP and runs 105min. We have a limited quantity, so order now. Color. 35mm **S212**

HORROR

CHLOE* (1934) Olive Borden, Reed Howes, Molly O'Day. A gnarled old black voodoo mistress from the Everglades comes out of the swamp to seek revenge on a white plantation lord. Later evidence surfaces that her daughter, Chloe, may actually be the plantation lord's long lost daughter. A frenzied, realistic sacrificial voodoo ceremony highlights the climax of this wonderful film that weaves its way through an atmosphere of swamp shacks, alligators, voodoo dolls, snakes, bats and cypress trees. A charming score underlies the film and adds a flavor that's similar to WHITE ZOMBIE. 16mm **H248**

CURSE OF THE WRAYDONS* (1949) Ted Slaughter, Bruce Seton, Andrew Laurence. Tod's a mad spy who goes around the countryside strangling just about everybody he can get his hands on. He has a secret lab complete with torture chamber. This is the most over the-top lessing sneering, insidious laughing, totally loony tunes performance Tod ever gave. A delightful horror melodrama with numerous scenes of Tod going absolutely bonkers. 35mm **H246**

DIE, MONSTER, DIE (1965) Boris Karloff, Nick Adams, Suzan Farmer, Freda Jackson. An AIP classic! Karloff plays the lord of a strange manor around which all life--plant and animal--seem to be mutating into hideous monstrosities. Adams is the meddling American who has come to rescue Boris' daughter. He discovers a large radioactive meteorite in the cellar. Color, from 35mm. **H247**

TOMB OF LIGEIA (1965) Vincent Price, Elizabeth Sheppard, Derek Francis. The last AIP Corman Poe film is beautiful to look at with more outdoor shots than previous Poe films. Price plays the strange dressed-in-black-nobleman obsessed with his dead wife. Has his new wife been possessed her sinister spirit? Color. 35mm **H246**



RETURN OF THE GIANT MAJIN (1966) Kojiro Hongo, Shiho Fujimura. It's rumble time again for an ancient Japanese god whose spirit inhabits a giant stone statue. He romps around the countryside stomping the bad guys in a medieval feud. Good overall production values with some great action sequences are featured in this well done sequel to MAJIN, MONSTER OF TERROR. Color. 16mm **H249**

THE CRIMSON CULT (1967 aka **CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR**) Boris Karloff, Christopher Lee, Barbara Steele, Mark Eden, Michael Gough. Lee and Steele are wicked masters of witchcraft. Karloff is the occult expert who thwarts their evil plans. This British edition features "R" rated footage and alternate music not featured in the original American theatrical & TV releases. Color. 35mm **H250**

THE CONQUEROR WORM (1968) Vincent Price, Ian Ogilvy, Hillary Dwyer, Patrick Wymark. One of Price's best films has him as the corrupt "Witchfinder General" who tortures and blackmails his victims for money, power, and sex. A classic. NOTE: This later British edition features "R" rated footage and alternate music not featured in the original American theatrical release. Color. 35mm **H251**

THE OBLONG BOX (1969) Vincent Price, Christopher Lee, Hillary Dwyer. Price has his monstrous deformed brother buried alive. Things get sticky though when the brother is brought back from the grave and allowed to go on killing sprees. Color, from 35mm. **H252**

CRY OF THE BANSHEE (1970) Vincent Price, Essy Persson, Patrick Mower, Elisabeth Bergner. A vengeance seeking Druid cult leader is out to get Price and his family. She sends a demon werewolf in the form of a handsome young man to finish off Vinnie and the kids. A colorful 15th century witch story. Color, from 35mm. **H253**

LISA AND THE DEVIL* (1972) Telly Savalas, Elke Sommer; directed by Mario Bava. A magnificent film about a beautiful young woman stranded with a devil-like character in a creepy isolated mansion. There she discovers she is the look-a-like for the evil owner's unfaithful mistress whose rotting corpse still lies in a secret room. This fantastic film is laced with an overwhelming sense of morbid necrophilia and a constant feeling of impending horror. NOTE: this version does not have that awful Robert Alda footage that was added into the American release version. HOUSE OF EXORCISM. Rated "R." 95 minutes. Letterboxed from a color 35mm print. **H254**



SWORD AND SANDAL

THOR AND THE AMAZON WOMEN (1960) Joe Robinson, Suzy Anderson, Harry Baird, Mana Flore. Our mighty hero battles the Njala civilization of Amazonian women. This is perhaps the best "bad" sword and sandal film ever made--really ludicrous in a nearly hysterical manner. Lots of silly dialogue and amateurish sound effects are complimented by an endless series of clumsily staged gladiatorial combats between buxom Amazon babes. A riot. Color. 16mm **SS95**

FURY OF ACHILLES (1962) Gordon Mitchell, Jacques Bergerac. The epic story of Troy. Achilles, who initially resists the idea of leading an attack on the fortified city, eventually leads the Greeks to victory over the embattled Trojans. Color. 16mm **SS96**

ULYSSES AGAINST THE SON OF HERCULES* (1963) Georges Marchal, Michael Lane, Allessandra Panaro, Yvette Lebon, Dunng an exciting sea battle, Hercules captures Ulysses. However, both are soon captured by weird creatures, half-man, half-bird. Our heroes try to escape, but eventually find themselves pitted against the creatures master, a beautiful yet evil queen. Color. 16mm **SS97**

GOLIATH AT THE CONQUEST OF DAMASCUS* (1964) Rock Stevens, Helga Line. The legendary strong man, Goliath goes through a series of harrowing adventures as he helps an exiled king regain his throne. Lots of fierce battle scenes. Color. 16mm **SS98**

CHALLENGE OF THE GLADIATOR (1964) Rock Stevens Gloria Milland Harsh cruelty sweeps over the madman Nero's corrupt Roman empire The rebel slave Spartacus leads a revolt against the empire in this colorful spectacle Color from 16mm **SS99**

EXPLOITATION

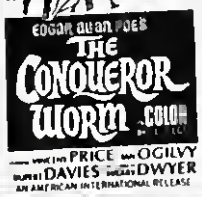
SECRETS OF A MODEL (1940) Sharon Lee Harold Daniels, Julian Madison This exploitation classic shows what can happen to young gals when they run out of cash A pretty young girl needs cash for her dying mom and ends up as a "model" for a sculpture called "The Spirit of Youth" Later she gets smashed and lets a no-good-playboy-type have his way with her What's a girl to do? 35mm **X095**

LOVE LIFE OF ADOLPH HITLER (1948 aka CONFORM OR DIE) A poorly edited yet intriguing documentary about Hitler and Mussolini There are some interesting home movies of Eva Braun and her scantily-clad girlfriends swimming too More vivid is the gut-wrenching footage of Nazi atrocities (NO! we don't recommend this for the kids) Mussolini and other war criminals are also shown in death Nightmarish to say the least Dwain Esper supposedly had a hand in it Re-released in later years with footage of Mao added 35mm **X096**

ANO THE WILD, WILD WOMEN* (1960) Anna Magnani Giulietta Masina A harsh study about the grim realities of life in a non-coed, totally female prison environment Story concerns a young girl who comes to prison and experiences the entire prison subculture The inmates she befriends vary from big tough dangerous dames to smaller submissive ladies who are totally lost in prison life Very exploitive yet still a fascinating look at women's prison life This is a damn good movie Three stars by Leonard Maltin From 16mm **X097**

GIRL IN TROUBLE (1963) Tammy Clark Ray Menard Martin Smith A cheap, sleazy, crummy exploitation film shot in and around New Orleans A young farmer's daughter leaves the bliss of small-town life for the rat race of the big city She goes from model to stripper finding herself abused by lecherous men at every turn Some great period shots of early '60s country and city life This would probably be rated 'R' for some occasional topless shots 35mm **X098**







ACTION-ADVENTURE

PLEASE NOTE All titles in this section are just $12.95 plus $2.05 per title for packaging, handling and postage

THE LIVE WIRE* (1935) Dick Telmedge, Alberta Vaughn, Martin Turner Dick finds an ancient vase on an uncharted island Later he leads two archeologists back to the island There they discover the skeleton-laden temples of a lost civilization Tons of fisticuffs! The temple shots were filmed on Universal's horror sets 18mm **AA06**

THOROUGHBRED (1935) Toby Wing, Kenne Duncan Wheeler Oakman Kenne is an out-of-work reporter who wins an unknown horse in a dice game Horse turns out to be very fast Toby helps Kenne into racing but the two of them run up against race-fixer Oakman Toby's the cutest thing on two legs Top 16mm print **AA07**

THE LION MAN (1936) John Hall Kathleen Burke Richard Adams A British businessman is murdered by an evil sheik but his young son--who survivnd the massacre--is raised in the desert and eventually grows up to become known as "El Lion" He eventually has a confrontation with the man who killed his father From 16mm **AA08**

DUKE OF THE NAVY (1942) Ralph Byrd Veda Ann Borg Stubby Krugger Two fun-loving sailors go out on leave Before they know it they get mixed up with gangsters and buried treasure Where's Dick Tracy when you need him Another PRC epic From 16mm **AA09**

JACK OF DIAMONDS (1949) Nigel Patrick Joan Carol Cyril Raymond A young couple charters a yacht They set out to find a sunken treasure but meet up with some unexpectnd happenings This is an interesting and rare British adventure pic From 16mm **AA10**

TREASURE OF THE AZTECS (1965) Lex Barker Gerard Barray Rik Battaglia A doctor obtains financial aid from a wealthy Count who ends up murdered! A disinherited son comes forward and accuses the doctor of the murder Things end up in the wilds of Mexico where the hunt is on for a secret treasure Color 16mm **AA11**



MYSTERY-SUSPENSE-FILM NOIR

PLEASE NOTE All titles in this section are just $12.95 plus $2.05 per title for packaging, handling and postage

VALLEY OF WANTED MEN (1935) Frankie Darro Roy Mason Russell Hopton Grant Withers, Drue Leyton Interesting early indie about three convicts who escape from prison They return to Pleasant Valley in the hopes of finding the criminal who framnd one of them on a bank robbery charge Frankie and his sister help out 16mm **M270**

SHADOWS OVER SHANGHAI (1937) James Dunn Ralph Morgan Robert Barrat Linda Gray A flyer who's carrying a valuable golden amulet, is shot down over China by a ruthless Russian agent who also wants the amulet (it's worth 5 million) The amulet winds up with the flyer's sister, who flees from the Russian into Shanghai where she meets up with a wisecracking American reporter 16mm **M271**

VENGEANCE (1937) Lyle Talbot, Wendy Barrie Marc Lawrence Eddie Acuff Lucille Lund Lyle's a cop who hesitates in using his gun during a payroll robbery This allows the robbers to escape Lyle then quits the force in disgrace and turns to a life of crime Good B crime drama originally distributnd by Columbia Pictures From 16mm **M272**

MURDER IN SOHO* (1938 aka MURDER IN THE NIGHT) Jack La Rue Sandra Storm, Bernard Lee George Withers A murder is committnd in a slick nightclub and the body dumped into the street An inspector has a notion of where the murder really took place and sets out to track the killer down A slick, well-made crime film with lots of atmosphere LaRue's priceless Recommendnd 16mm **M273**

FLYING BLIND (1942) Richard Arlen Jean Parker Nils Aster, Roger Pryor Eddie Quillen, Dick Purcell Dwight Frye Grady Sutton Big cast helps this colorful B film about a notorious doctor who steals a secret military device then hijacks Anans airliner They end up crashing in the wild and are threatened by a raging forest fire Can they repair the plane in time? Frye has a small role as a traitorous plane engineer (wow! what a death scene) From 16mm **M274**

THE SUN SETS AT DAWN (1950) Walter Reed Phillip Shawn, Sally Parr A true story about a young man railroaded to the death house A smart reporter sent to cover the execution figures out who the real killer is, but can he get word to the warden in time? The electric chair is revved up and ready to go A literate, well-acted script Winner of the Cosmopolitan Magazine movie citation 16mm **M275**

MAN OF CONFLICT (1953) John Agar, Edward Arnold Susan Morrow Good drama about rich kid Agar coming home to be groomed to take over the family company only to find out that power has corrupted his father (Arnold) To make matters worse John falls for the daughter of one of the impoverished workers 16mm **M276**

RADIO CAB MURDER* (1954) Jimmy Hanley Lana Morris Jack Allen A remarkably well-done British thriller A man is found murdered in a car! The police then enlist the aid of an ex-con who infiltrates the gang responsible An intricate bank robbery scheme is on their agenda as this quality crime film Very suspenseful 16mm **M277**

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!
Save BIG on our..
"LUCKY 7 SALE!"
Buy any six titles from either of these two pages and receive the seventh title
ABSOLUTELY FREE!
Sale ends at midnight, 12/31/97, so ORDER NOW!
Sale price does not apply to accumulative purchases.

MURDER ON APPROVAL (1955) Tom Conway Delphi Lawrence Brian Worth A special investigator is on the trail of a priceless stamp that was recently stolen His main suspect is the nephew of a beautiful lady A British super mystery Not bad 16mm **M278**

WETBACKS* (1956) Lloyd Bridges Nancy Gates John Hoyt Barton MacLane The script is a little flaky but a great cast helps out this exciting B thriller about a down-on-his-luck fisherman who's stuck in a small Mexican fishing village He's then forced--at gunpoint--to run illegal aliens over the border A cool drive in movie 16mm **M279**

PASSION OF SLOW FIRE (1963) Jean DeSailly Alexandra Stewart Yves Robert An instructor goes to bed one night only to find the next day that a young girl was murdered in the room next to his He's immediately the prime suspect (even he's wife thinks he did it) Another murder soon follows Gripping and well-acted 16mm **M280**

SPYS, ESPIONAGE, INTRIGUE

NAVY SECRETS* (1939) Fay Wray Grant Withers, Craig Reynolds Grant's a Navy guy who's given the task of busting up a spy ring within the service Fay's just along for the ride, or is she? A nice little Monogram action flick From a good-looking 16mm print **SP28**

POISON IVY* (1953) Eddie Constantine, Howard Vernon A rousing action movie that could be Eddie's best film next to ALPHAVILLE As a tough federal agent Eddie's up to his badge in everything from gold smugglers to shark-infested waters Set in atmospheric Casablanca, this intrigue thriller has a distinct flavor not usually found in Eddie's other spy films From 16mm **SP29**

OPERATION HURRICANE/ FRIDAY NOON (1966) George Nader, Naina Wems Richard Munch Nader made a number of espionage and intrigue films Here he plays agent Jerry Cotton who's assigned the task of busting up a gang responsible for many murders and armed robberies throughout the country From 16mm **SP30**

THE FULLER REPORT (1966) Ken Clark, Beba Loncar Jess Hahn Ken (you might remember him from ATTACK OF THE GIANT LEECHES) plays an undercover agent His dangerous assignment is to stop an assassination that could start WW3! Color 16mm **SP31**

SPY TODAY, DIE TOMORROW (1967) Lex Barker Maria Perschy Brad Harris Eddie Arent Wolfgang Preiss Big name cast heads up this lukable spy thriller CIA headquarters receives an unbelievable message A nuclear bomb is missing from the U.S. weapons arsenal! Our agents are called in to find out what the heck is happening Good cloak and dagger action Color from 16mm **SP32**



FANTASY

A NIGHT OF MAGIC* (1944) Robert Griffith, Marian Olive Billy Scott A British playboy who just happens to be in possession of an ancient sarcophagus (it's sitting in his mansion living room), discovers there's a 3000-year old Egyptian princess inside--alive! She pops out one evening and the two of them go out on the town for an unforgettable night of romance and song This is--to say the least--one of the most oddball musical fantasies we've ever seen 16mm **F025**

FAME AND THE DEVIL* (1950) Mesha Auer Marilyn Buford Marcel Cerdan How many men have gone to the devil (literally) over a woman This off-beat fantasy is about three men a diplomat a singer, and a boxer who consider selling their soul to Satan over a beautiful dame Cerdan--who plays the boxer--was the real-life middle weight champ and died shortly after in a plane crash 16mm **F026**

HANS BRINKER (1965) Reed Maxwell Cristal Standish William Victor This is a beautifully done reworking of the age-old story of Hans Brinker and the silver skates Well-scripted well acted--overall this is just a beautiful family film Not really a fantasy per se, but close enough in mood and flavor From a beautiful color 16mm print **F027**

THE MAGIC SERPENT (1966) Hiroki Matsukata Tomoko Ogawa Watch out for that dragon! Years after the murder of his father a young Japanese warrior challenges the murderer to a duel They both transform themselves into giant monsters and go toe to toe In the end our hero flies away on a giant eagle Color 16mm **F028**

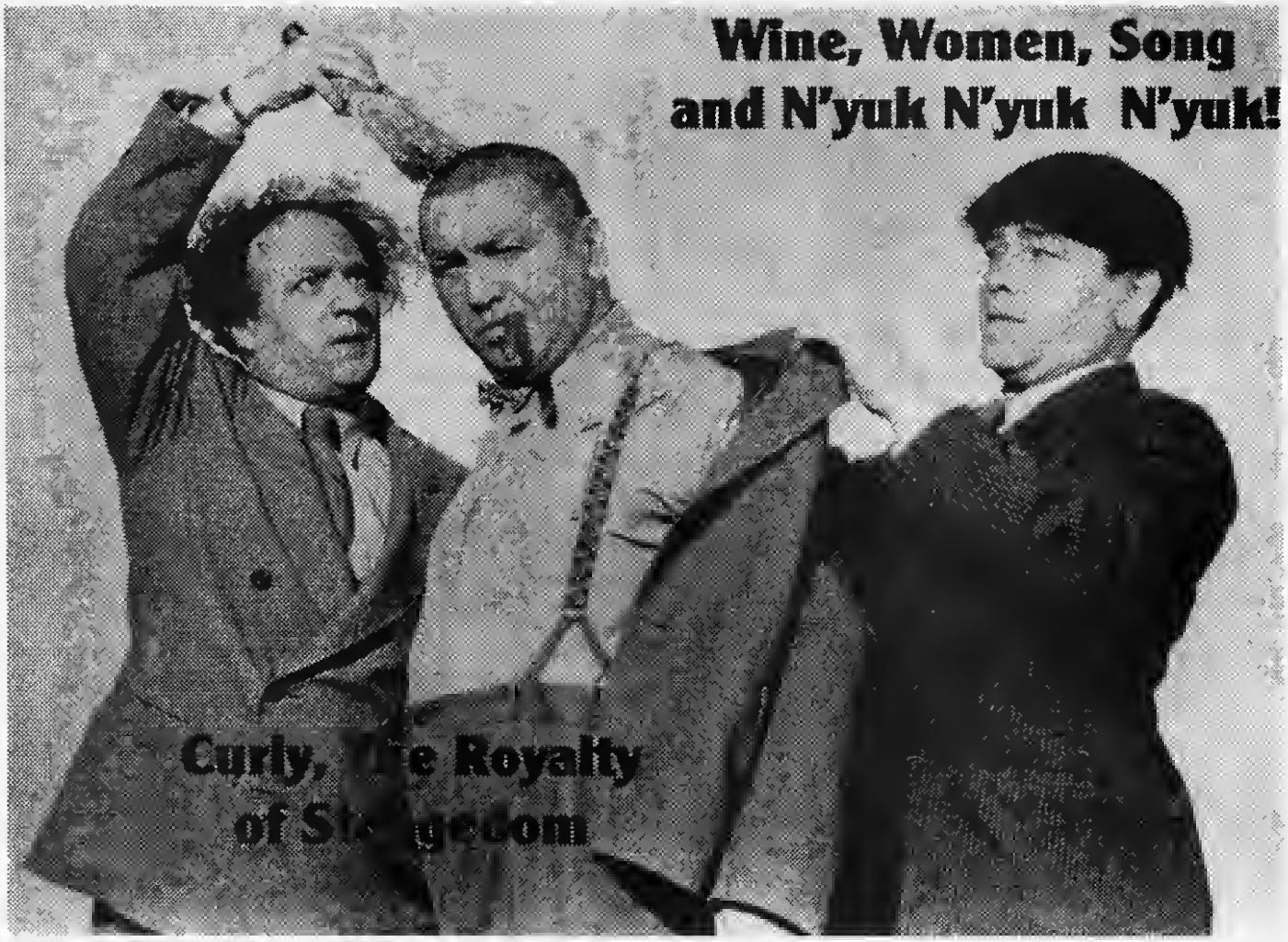
SILENT THRILLS

THE OEERSLAYER (1920) Bela Lugosi, Emil Mamelok, Heirs Hindan This early silent version of the J. F. Cooper classic is a little stagy but still very interesting to watch Lugosi plays the courageous Indian warrior, Chingachgook This is the closest Bela will ever come to making into our Sinister Six-gun section From 16mm **ST43**

DAUGHTER OF THE NIGHT* (1921) Bela Lugosi, Lee Parry, Violette Napierska A lost Lugosi film finally surfaces! Bela looks absolutely wonderful and has a meaty role in this silent espionage drama He plays a French aristocrat that falls for a Russian cabaret singer Watch out, though she's secretly involved with a Russian revolutionary movement She entices Bela to aid her cause Unfortunately Bela's recently jilted girlfriend just happens to be a top Russian spy! Very interesting and surprisingly well done Known in Europe as "Dance on the Volcano" Music score From 16mm **ST44**

THE MIDNIGHT GIRL (1925) Bela Lugosi Lila Lee, Gareth Hughes Bela plays a corrupt patron of the arts in this old melodrama from the mid-20s He and his stepson find themselves at odds over the same singer Will they resolve their differences? 16mm **ST45**

DON Q, SON OF ZORRO (1966) Douglas Fairbanks Mary Astor Warner Oland Donald Crisp Fairbanks has four roles in this 4 star silent classic, including the title role and his legendary father Doug was at the height of his career and he looks it 16mm **ST46**



Wine, Women, Song and N'yuk N'yuk N'yuk!

Curly, The Royalty of Stoogedom

By Lee Harris

And in the distance, we hear the call of the wolf: "Hiya, babe!"

Curly is the best loved of the Three Stooges, yet little is known about his background or personal life. In researching this series of articles, a goldmine of information turned up on Moe and Larry, largely due to the revival of popularity of the Stooges when the Columbia shorts were shown on television. Shemp had the most extensive acting career of any of the Stooges, and Joe Besser and Joe DeRita were veteran performers when they joined the trio in 1955 and 1958, respectively.

But Curly - ? His comic genius seemingly came out of nowhere, shone brilliantly in 102 shorts and twelve features for thirteen years (1933 - 46), then disappeared after a disabling stroke. He didn't even live to be 50, dying decades before any journalists or book publishers deemed The Three Stooges' comedy worthy of interviews or analysis.

Jerome Lester Horowitz was born on October 22, 1903 to Sol and Jennie Horowitz, destined to be the "baby of the family" to his four older brothers Moe, Shemp, Jack and Irving (who all called him "Babe"). As the youngest, he was decidedly spoiled by his otherwise no-nonsense mother. As with the Eastern European and Lithuanian Jewish families that produced many of the Hollywood studio moguls, Jennie wore the pants in the family, running a successful real estate business. She was not a mother who would welcome show business as a career choice for any of her sons, demanding that they take up more reliable, solid professions. Since the world heard little of Jack or Irving, let's say that she was 40 per cent successful!

Curly wasn't as smart or as good in school as Moe, or as mischievous as Shemp. He was basically a quiet kid who idolized his older brothers, and once he reached dating age, was popular with girls. He had wavy brown hair and later a mustache, and was good at basketball and practically any musical instrument he picked up (ukulele, standup bass, spoons, trombone). He also had a fine tenor singing voice, with the piercing tone for which Dick Powell was later famous.

Eventually dropping out of school, Curly enjoyed much of the roaring twenties bumming around the Long Island beaches in the summer, and dancing at the Triangle Ballroom in Brooklyn in the winter. During these pre-showbiz days, he had no fixed occupation, doing odd jobs and chauffeuring his parents around New York in their Hupmobile. Curly was still living at home, the last of the five sons, as Jack and Irving had married and moved away, and Moe and Shemp were touring in vaudeville.

In 1928, Curly impulsively married a woman whose identity is pretty much a mystery, other than that her name may have been Pauline. Various Horowitz cousins who remember this period say that the woman was Jewish, and others say that she wasn't; but the "shiksa" issue notwithstanding, one suspects that the domineering Jennie would not have approved of any woman whom Curly chose to marry. He concealed the union for about four months, and was forced to tell his mother when he came to her for a loan. Jennie threw a fit, and Curly resolved never to come to his mother for money again. Faced with the economic reality of needing a job, some inner instinct told him not to waste his time pursuing a "real" job, and that entertainment was his practical gift for making a living.

On the other hand, Curly didn't have the first clue as to what sort of showbiz gig he could land, or handle. He had no actual experience on a stage. Just a lot of memories of tagging along with Moe to see vaudeville, melodramas, Shakespeare, but his favorites were musicals and comedies. The job he got had plenty of music AND comedy, as "guest conductor" for the Orville Knapp band. After a preposterous introduction making him out to be a distinguished, stuffed-shirt classical genius from the great halls of Europe, Curly would come trudging out with the oversized tails of his coat dragging on the floor. As he conducted away, giving the orchestra the full Leonard Bernstein treatment, pieces of his tux and tails gradually began to fall away. At the end of the act, he was left only with the old fashioned drop-seat long underwear, held up by a safety pin. The audience roared at the finale as he took a deep bow, as if he were unaware of his deteriorating outfit. While this wasn't exactly headlining at the Palace, or even on the same level as what Moe and Shemp were

doing on the vaudeville circuits, Curly had had his first taste of being a professional entertainer.

Back in the cobwebby old world of Jennie's traditional Friday night dinner, Curly dutifully listened as his mother laid down the law: he was to divorce his wife, and accompany her and Papa Sol on a trip to Europe. Which is exactly what he did.

The divorce edict was a real slur to the 25 year old Curly's manly independence, but he felt vindicated after the European trip. His parents were going to visit their old hometown in Lithuania, while Curly would spend a few weeks alone in Paris, which Jennie thought would remove all thoughts of women and showbiz from her baby's mind. Big Mistake! He headed straight for the Lido, Moulin Rouge, Folies Bergere, and targeted the prettiest Parisian women with his Brooklynese "Hi, Toots!" It was like turning W.C. Fields loose in a distillery, or Errol Flynn at a high school cheerleader tryout. From this time on, Curly paid a lot more attention to his own needs than to those of his mother.

"How did Curly get to become a Stooge?", you might be asking yourself. He learned the mechanics of the act the same you and I did, forty or so years later: by watching The Three Stooges.

Curly had gone back to Orville Knapp after the Paris trip, but was soon sick of it. In the summer of 1930, Sol's sister Esther was coming from Minnesota to pay a visit with her daughter Emily. One highlight of their visit was going to see Moe and Shemp in their act with Ted Healy ("Ted Healy and His Racketeers"), at The Palace. Moe arranged for A-1 house seats, and Curly drove Sol, Jennie, Esther and Emily into Manhattan for the big night.

The act at this time featured Healy in the familiar bossy role that Moe would later assume, slapping the others around, and on the receiving end of all this were Moe, Shemp, Larry and xylophonist Fred Sanborn. By the time Curly and the family saw them at the Palace, the act had been brought up to a fine polish. Sure, it was slapstick, and sure, the humor was as crude as ever, but what was killing the audience was the *timing*. The punchlines, reactions, and rough-housing had been honed to a millisecond, through years of doing eight shows a day, six days a week.



As the Horowitz clan took this all in, Sol registered a kind of pleasant befuddlement; Jennie sat there like a great Buddha, an immovable Mount Rushmore, failing to see anything funny at all. Curly was in the first of dozens of nights of study. He returned to the theater every night, his ears filling up with greasepaint, the showbiz bug chomping him harder all the time.



A live act doing sellout business every night soon attracted a movie offer, for Ted and the boys to appear in the Fox film *Soup To Nuts*, out in Hollywood. Curly drove Moe and Shemp and their wives and families to the train station, and had a huge lump in his throat after seeing them off for "The Coast." A movie career for his brothers made him feel as if the whole world was in the acting profession, except him, and he cried his way home to Brooklyn.

After wrapping production on *Soup To Nuts*, Fox felt as if the Stooges without Healy were the laugh getters in the picture, and therefore Healy was left out of the contract offered. Moe, Larry and Shemp signed (Fred Sanborn was somehow not included in the offer either), only to have the contract canceled in a few days. Healy had gone behind their backs to Fox production chief Winifred Sheehan, saying "One Irishman wouldn't do this to another Irishman." In a nutshell, the Stooges split with Healy; Healy though *he* was the act and got replacement Stooges (the Sammy Wolf/Mousie Garner bunch); they were awful, Ted promised to stop drinking, and talked Moe, Larry and Shemp (touring as "The Three Lost Souls") into coming back.

Well, Ted was the living incarnation of Rodney Dangerfield's line; "I joined Alcoholic's Anonymous — I still drink, I just use a different name." He returned to the sauce hard and heavy, and Shemp couldn't take it any longer. He left the act, and thrilled Curly by calling him and saying there was an opening in the Stooge department! Curly called Moe, who confirmed that Shemp had had enough, and adding that Curly had an appointment the next day with Healy.

Curly was extremely nervous at this meeting. Moe, Shemp, and Larry, not to mention Healy, were all veteran performers. No matter how many

(continued)









times he had seen the act, and learned it through sheer rote and repetition, the Orville Knapp job was all he had to offer in the way of practical experience. But Curly was applying to be a Stooge, not an accountant, and Healy's instincts together with Moe's recommendation did the trick — with one condition. To complement Moe's bangs and Larry's frizziness, he would have to shave his head. The next day, he did, and his hairlessness led Curly to the ironic nickname by which he'd be on a first-name basis with the whole world. He told Ted and Moe, "If you want me, call me Curly."

After horrifying his mother by revealing his smooth dome at the traditional Friday night dinner (she knew something was up when he wore a cap rather than his blue velvet yarmulke), and enduring her grueling guilt trips ("Who will take me to old age home, and drive Sol to Shul?"), Curly was on his way. He took Shemp's place in The Passing Show Of 1932, and went on to the Stooges' brief career at MGM, and the all time comedy classics at Columbia.

CURLY: "Let's play post office!"
WOMAN: "That's a kid's game."
CURLY: "Not the way I play it!"

On the daytime talk shows, and the pop-psych radio talk shows, I think it's still fashionable to talk about "getting in touch with your inner child." I think Curly was doing this from 1932 on! His squealing when he felt consternation, "nyyyah-ah-ah!" when frightened, and "whoo-whoo-whoo" all sound like reactions of a child, but from a rotund, funny looking grownup.

Curly was self conscious about his appearance. The shaved head may have gotten him into the act, but he found that it repelled most women, and the women he did attract were after his money. Prior to joining Healy and the Stooges, his beautiful head of hair attracted women like iron filings to a magnet, and afterwards, he had the appearance of an overgrown three year old, or at least someone stuck in the babyfat stage of adolescence.

Unfortunately, out of character and in real life, it seems as if Curly never did mature. After finally cutting the apron strings with Jennie, and starting to make the big money in movies and personal appearances, Moe had to look after his business affairs (including doing his income taxes). On the road on the Stooges' personal appearance tours, Moe would wait up till 3 or 4 AM for Curly to get in from nightclubbing.

And he did love to party! From the onset of his movie career until his marriage to Elaine Ackerman in 1937, Curly had a blast. He ate too much, drank too much, smoked too many cigars, but being single and with plenty of dough in 1930s Hollywood, it seemed like tomorrow was never there. Make comedy classics all day, cabaret all night, with three months off a year for personal appearances and vacation.

The carousing did start taking its toll, and in the Stooge comedies of the early to mid forties, you can see it. There has been speculation that before he had his major, career ending stroke in 1946, that he'd had several smaller strokes along the way. He is the same old brilliant Curly in 1945's Idiots Deluxe, and in the very next film, If A Body Meets A Body, looks as if he doesn't know where he is. Then he bounced right back for the next one, Microphonies, usually acknowledged by most Stooge fans as a favorite. He was at his worst in Monkey Businessmen in 1946, and five films later was stricken on the set of Half Wits' Holiday. Moe and Larry finished up the film alone, and except for a little cameo in Hold That Lion (arguably the best Stooge short with Shemp), he never made another movie.

In the summer of 1945, Curly traveled to Cottage Hospital in Santa Barbara for a complete physical and a little rest cure. He was diagnosed with high blood pressure, hypertension, and hemorrhaging of the retinas. This latter condition is a common symptom of diabetes. (Which this author has recently contracted, but so far it hasn't turned me into Curly.) Between the strokes and retinal hemorrhaging, is it possible that Curly was diabetic? Perennial Stooge nemesis Vernon Dent had

it, and died in 1963 after stopping insulin.

Also in 1945, under pressure from Moe to stabilize his life, Curly married the worst of his four wives, Marion. She was an absolute witch, whom Curly married just two weeks after their first meeting. He spent a fortune on her. After sufficient time had elapsed in their marriage for Marion to qualify for half of everything under California's community property laws, she left him and Curly filed for divorce. In court she said every vile thing she could think of about Curly, including a claim that he went around dirty, wouldn't bathe, when he was in fact fastidious in his personal habits. Anyway, Marion did emerge as a perfect housekeeper; she kept the house, and everything else she could get her hands on. This devastated Curly, and the Half Wits' Holiday stroke followed just three months later.

Curly was in and out of hospitals for the rest of his life, but there was one sunny aspect to his last five years. At a San Fernando Valley steak house called Charlie Foy's Supper Club, Curly was enjoying himself within the confines of his strict health regimen. No liquor, and a small, nutritious meal, rather than eating the place out of its profit. He was introduced to a pretty young woman named Valerie Newman, and apologized for not being able to share a drink with her. With a dash of Stooge spontaneity, he ordered a bottle of ginger ale brought to the table, in an iced champagne bucket! Valerie was not only attractive but had a sense of humor, and Curly had at last — albeit a little late — found a woman who would love him unselfishly. Inspired by Moe's daughter Joan's backyard wedding in June 1947, Curly married Val on July 31.

In May 1948, Val gave birth to a daughter, Janie, and though she brought joy into Curly's life, he was too ill to fully enjoy his new fatherhood. He suffered yet another stroke soon after her birth and was confined to a wheelchair. Still, Joan Howard Maurer's book on Curly has a two page spread of photos of Curly with Janie, and he is



exuding a glee that he never found in his restless nightclubbing, or purchases of new houses or dogs.

One other thing is revealed in Joan's book, by Curly's nephew Norman (the son of his brother Jack), who spent a lot of time with Curly around 1942. Interviewed for the book, Norman, now a doctor, says: "He would laugh about the most ridiculous things — the expulsion of gas was a source of humor to him. He would expel gas and say, 'I can clear a room our'. And it would tickle him so, he would break up — that was his boyish humor." In this age of Beavis and Butt-head, when you can get away with just about anything in a movie (such as the campfire scene in Blazing Saddles), can you imagine a Stooge comedy with Curly's merriment over his own farts?! And Moe: "Alright, chowderhead, who cut the cheese?"

"I can't die, I haven't seen *The Jolson Story*"
—Larry, *Squareheads of the Round Table*, 1948

Eventually, Valerie was unable to care for Curly alone. In August 1950, he went to the Motion Picture Hospital in Woodland Hills, seemed to improve, and went home. Stays at two nursing homes followed, with one doctor suggesting that because of Curly's paralysis and inability to speak, he should be transferred to a mental health facility. It was common then to attach the "nuthouse" or "Funny Farm" stigma to hospitalization for mental degeneration, and Moe blew his stack at the mere suggestion of having Curly so institutionalized.

After a lengthy hunt for the best care for Curly, Moe and Valerie settled on the Baldy View Sanitarium in San Gabriel. A couple of weeks later, Curly died there on January 18, 1952, aged 48. It was not unexpected news. He was buried two days later at Home of Peace cemetery, and his grave has become somewhat of a shrine for die-hard Stooge devotees who make the pilgrimage. They carry on the Jewish practice of leaving little presents — pennies, rocks, guitar picks — on his marker and at its base (like you see in the closing credits of *Schindler's List*).

Though I'm almost certainly preaching to the converted in the pages of *Cult Movies*, I think that Curly can be placed in the highest rank of movie comedians. The writers of the reams of intellectual stuff about Chaplin or Keaton deride the Three Stooges' brand of comedy as the lowest, but like the silent greats before him or the Jim Carreys to follow, Curly's brand of comedy was completely original. You can examine specific things, like his high voice originally coming from his on-stage nervousness (which reverts to its normal tone in the later shorts, when he was getting sick); or that he first got down on the floor and started spinning around because he couldn't remember his lines. Taken as a whole, though, Curly's character was something magically reached inside himself and pulled out—and as Shemp, Joe Besser and Joe DeRita later proved, he was irreplaceable.■



All photos ©Columbia Pictures. The Three Stooges is a trademark of Comedy III Productions, Inc.

Immense & Immortal

"Welcome To Our Muscle Pumping, Damsel Saving, Monster Fighting, Sword Swinging, Sandal Wearing Corner Of Film Fanaticism!"



Alan Steel shows his stuff in Hercules Against the Moonmen *(1965)*

by Stephen Flacassier

It's a genre of film full of paradoxes, misunderstandings and overexaggerations. A type of film that has over the years become the butt of jokes for many people, including those within cult film circles. It's the genre of film whose most classy label is "Peplum," so-called because some French critics decided to name it after the most common type of clothing worn in the films. And upon observation we find that "The Mighty Sons Of Hercules" still have retained all their pumped up action/adventure thrills throughout the years.

Starting with Steve Reeves' epic film *Hercules*, the Sword and Sandal films began their run at theater box offices around the world. The credit-roll at the start of the film tells the legend, "Immense and Immortal was the strength of Hercules, like the world and the Gods to whom he belonged." This pretty much set the tone for the next 10 years worth of Peplum films. This first film became a top moneymaker and made Steve Reeves the top International male movie star in the early 1960s.

While there had been costume dramas before, and films based on classic legend, Hercules brought several things to the screen for the first time which captured the movie going public's attention. First and foremost had to be Reeves' spectacular build. This film gave people their first look at what was possibly the best build at the time. And if curiosity about Reeves brought them into the theaters, the film had enough dynamic quality to keep them there.

The film is, at heart, a watered down version of the legend of "Jason," a story that originally only included Hercules as one of the group, whereas the film centers around him. Filmed on a good-sized budget, the film smartly concentrates on action and romance with a lovely lady for Hercules to win and a few to fight off also. But fantasy is a mainstay for the genre and this film included Hercules battling ape-like beasts, a lion, a bull, various guards, but let the character of Jason tackle the dragon. The action, the fights, the monsters would all be important elements in the films that followed, along with a beautiful woman for the hero to fall for and a sniveling villain with enough henchmen to keep the hero busy until the climax.

Months after *Hercules* hit the United States, Reeves follow-up film *Goliath And The Barbarians* came along fueling the fires all the more. Soon other Italian films featuring unknown bodybuilders started production, turning their stars into icons for the fans. Kirk Morris, Ed Fury, Alan Steel, Rock Stevens would become well-known names in certain households. Former "Tarzan" Gordon Scott would join as would one of Reeves' few true rivals on the professional bodybuilding circuit, Reg Park. As the series progressed, the supernatural elements started fading away and the films started concentrating more on the Gladiator side of things. Mark Forest made the switch with ease and was joined by Richard Harrison and Guilliano Gemma who was more successful in the Spaghetti Western craze that helped run Peplum out of town.

Made at a time when many people believe life was simpler, there was literally nothing else like these films out there and just about nothing like them since. If you were used to heroes fighting for their lives and overcoming obstacles, then these films would blow your blasé expectations out of the water. In the Sword and Sandal world, guys didn't just fight the villains, they threw them across rooms, bent them in half, tossed boulders the size of Boulder at them while all the time protecting his loved one, who he just met, and wearing only a quarter of what she had on. The fights that took the form of long wrestling matches were spectacular with choreographed moves that rival any Gene Kelly movie. And if there was a monster thrown into the mix, the worse the monster looked the better the picture got. Medusas and Cyclopes were the monsters of choice for most films, but there were a fair amount of rubber suited dragons to thrill the most jaded Godzilla fan.

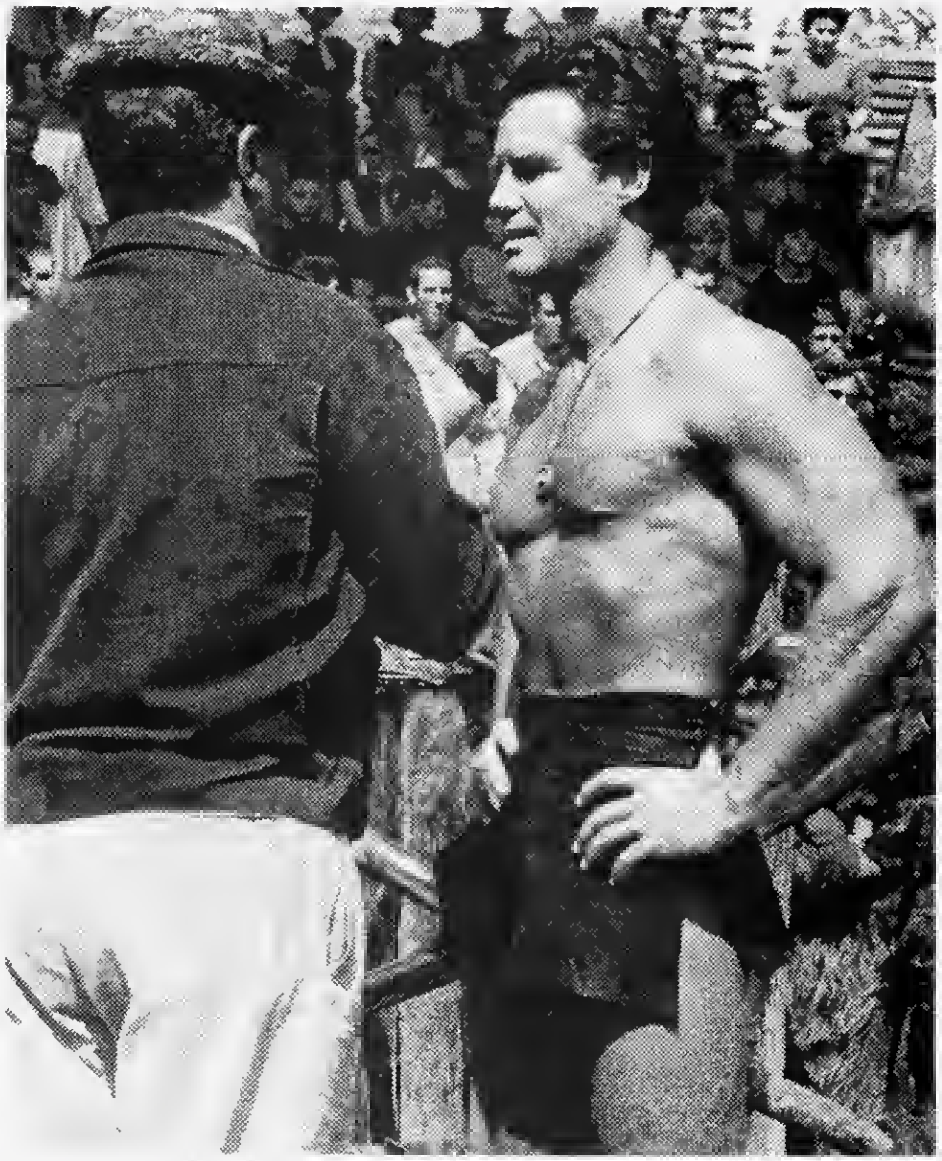
The sets were cardboard and usually not well heated enough for the actors, since you can see their breath coming out of their mouths even when the plot's set in deepest Africa. Last but not least, the Sword and Sandal films as shown in America have the most notoriously dreadful dubbing of any foreign film ever. Tie this all together and maybe you don't come up with Bergman or Welles, but you get films with their own strange flair, their own offbeat attraction.

Most of the fans who sat through the Saturday matinees or never missed the syndicated TV package of "Sons Of Hercules" films during the '60s know that one of the best ways to take a trip into the past is to pop a videotape of one of these films

into the machine, sit back and take your brain off the hook for 90 minutes or so. Not really monster movies, but the best ones still had some great monsters for the heroes to fight. Not westerns but if you look at the set up, the hero rides into town and fights the outlaws until it all comes down to a big stand off; there are some undeniable comparisons. Not Army or War movies, but most of these stories use as the basis countries about to go to war and finish with the armies having at each other. Certainly not professional wrestling, but the only thing missing from some of the fights scenes were the ropes keeping the opponents boxed in. While the films seem to have taken cues from those other genres they are not truly part of them, and the fans of those other genres usually don't want anything to do with these Sword and Sandal films, despite the similarities. At best they might consider them curiosity pieces or a footnote to their own genre of choice.

Also it's worth noting that Sword and Sandal films are generally acknowledged to have been made only from the mid '50s to the mid '60s. The rash of "Conan" type films that followed are very close, but not the same. Most fans will even have a fair selection of those movies in their collections so it's not like they're the bastard children of the genre, just not part of it. Those are action films, these are Sword and Sandals. This is Peplum.

Of course, people who didn't get it then still don't get it now and it's becoming increasingly difficult to explain to those who have come along since what the attraction is. I say this because if there's another characteristic to the fans of this genre it's that we really want you to understand just how great and cool these movies are so you can enjoy them for yourself and frankly, get off our backs. We know the jokes. We know what the films look like. We all saw *Airplane* with Peter Graves' "Do you like Gladiator films Bobby?" line while he's trying to pick up the little boy in the cockpit. Groucho Marx claimed he told Cecil B. DeMille at the premiere of *Samson and Delilah* that the new film would be a failure because "Victor Mature has much bigger knockers than Hedy Lamar." Which pretty much sums up a lot of people's feelings about the films.



Steve Reeves consults with the director between takes on the set of The Slave *(1963)*

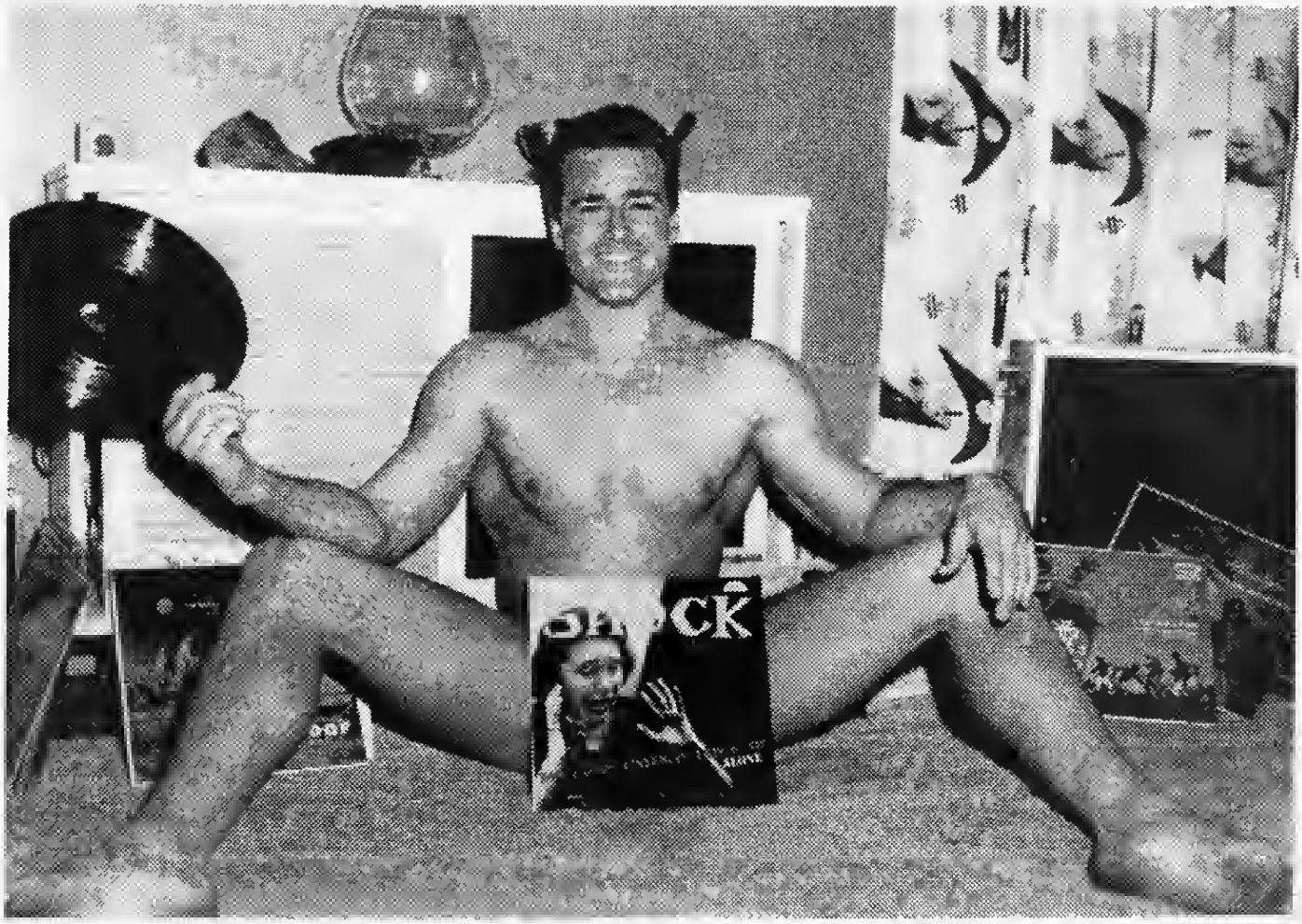
While the films might be considered camp by today's audiences, they've also got the blemish of being some source of homoerotic stimulus, or at least viewed as being that. And therefore, some film fans seem absolutely scared to death of Sword and Sandal films. It's amazing how the sudden appearance of shaved down, greased up bodybuilders wearing little more than swim trunks while fighting each other can send guys scurrying from the room faster than holy water on a vampire. To include and highlight so much raw, naked flesh in what's generally considered "boy power fantasies" does tend to unnerve people in a way that, say, seeing someone chopped to bits with a chainsaw does not.

So, to the point. The art of bodybuilding was coming into it's own and the public had a curiosity for it that wasn't being fulfilled all that quickly. The start of the Peplum cycle took care of that. There were bodybuilding magazines on the newsstands, that much is true. Some of these were concerned with the actual sport of bodybuilding, while others were blazing the trail in the new trend of "Beefcake Photography." Not-so-coincidentally, several of the Peplum stars found their way into those magazines, got their chance at film stardom because of their appearance in those magazines. Ed Fury is the best example of this. While he did a few small film roles before landing in the Peplum cycle, it's clear that his appearance in the buff on those magazine pages did more to start his career than anything else. And while Fury might have been the most obvious star, there are indications that a few other future-stars were selling nude photos of themselves in the classified ad pages of those zines. Female stars were doing the same kind of thing, so—why not?

Now, the producers of these films in Italy knew what they were doing. They chose their future-stars (perhaps from classified ads in the bodybuilder magazines?) for their awesome, god-like physical proportions. And they filled movie theaters around the world by doing it. Many ladies and many gentlemen bought tickets to indulge in an acquired taste these films tended to satisfy, so many buffed-up bodies sweating and straining, passing tests of strength or endurance, being caged up or tortured for the amusement of the Queen. Those kind of tastes. But it's all harmless entertainment. The heroes might be buffed up, but the proceedings unfold along the lines of a cartoon show or comic book. Today it can be seen as Camp or Kitch, but it was never really threatening. On a personal note, I'd be much happier sitting next to someone in a theater who was enjoying seeing so much flesh on display than someone getting angry that the beheadings and eye gougings in the horror movie they're watching just aren't real enough.

So then; just who are these heroes of legend and lore? Film lore, that is to say. It must be confessed that there is little difference from one character to the next in these movies. The classic Peplum hero is usually single, on the move with lots of friends who are in need of help. It would seem that the hero is always, always, always just returning to a village/city/kingdom that he visited years before just in time to save an old girlfriend/ruler from a most dastardly evil. There's nothing the hero won't do for his friends. He may be Hercules, Atlas, Goliath, Samson or what-have-you, but he goes all the way for his friends on the side of Good and

(continued)



Right. He'll marry the friend's sister or overthrow the tyrant who stole the thrown. And he's a superman who, after lots of swordplay and torture and personal sacrifice, gets the job done in the final reel.

Hercules. These films are sometimes offhandedly called, "Hercules films" by the fans, and some of the films were actually made that way from the start. Who is Hercules? On the screen Hercules is a mighty man who's never too busy to stop and help those less fortunate, asking nothing in return except friendship. In legends of old Hercules is a butt-headed rapist who killed his own children and eventually himself when poisoned by his wife. Perhaps the best known legends about Hercules center around the 10 labors he had to perform in order to become immortal. These were generally ignored by the films. One version of the tale states that after marrying the young princess, Hercules shaves off his beard and takes to knitting while his wife takes the masculine role and starts hunting. What a feature this would have made.

Samson. He is, of course, the Old Testament hero whose classic love for Delilah only served to get him blinded after losing his hair and strength for his troubles. Enough was left of his strength to allow Samson to take revenge on the Philistines by bringing their city down on their heads. Samson was the name tacked onto the films for American release by distributors stateside. The films were actually supposed to be about a mythical character named Maciste, who'd been turning up in Italian films since the silent era. You can call him anything you like; what's in a name? By the 1960s these films were all carbon copies of Hercules. Richard Lloyd's Samson gets closest to the original idea of the man right down to his Hebrew origins and knowingly dangerous attraction to Delilah. It should be noted that some references point out that events in the life of Samson might be the basis for the legends of Hercules.

Goliath. This is also the character from the Bible, the giant of a man faced down by young David. The boy kills the giant and becomes king. Again, the American distributors plastered the name of Goliath over-top of films about Maciste, thinking Goliath to be the more marketable name for the body-shaved, half-naked hunk of manliness drenched in olive oil.

Atlas. Atlas was the King of Mauretania and sided with the Titans in their war against Zeus. For his punishment Atlas was forced to take the weight of the world on his shoulders but would eventually be turned to stone by Persius using the Gorgon's head. In legend Hercules takes over the strain of holding the Earth up while Atlas goes off to retrieve the Golden apples. He's not going to switch back but having been tricked by Atlas to take the weight in the first place, Hercules tricks him back and makes off with the apples. This was never worked into any of the movies since Hercules' only run-in with the Golden Apples takes place in *Hercules In The Haunted World*, which doesn't mention Atlas in the mix at all. Just as in the previous cases, if this name is used, the film was probably originally about Maciste.

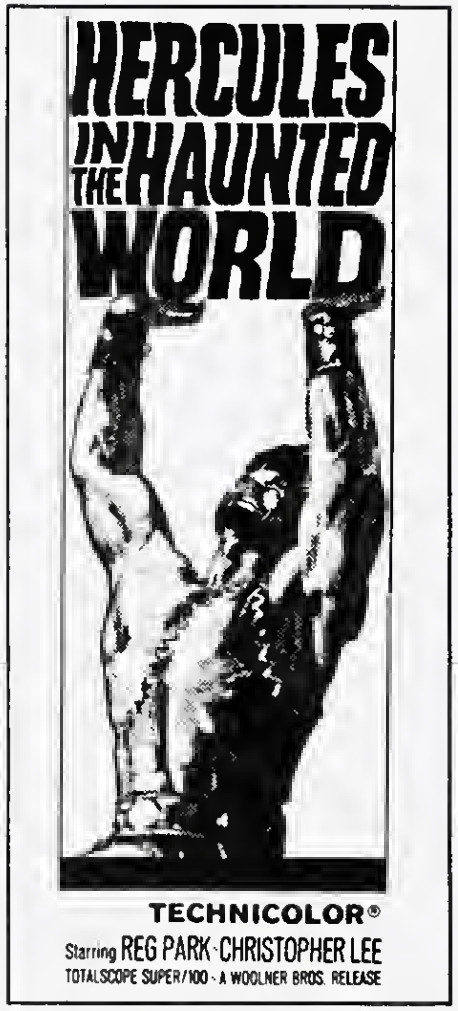
Jason. The legend of Jason and his hunt for the Golden Fleece is used as story fodder often in these films while rarely being a major character. Even in the Ray Harryhausen film, *Jason And The Argonauts*, the special effects take center stage from the main character. And that film's telling of the tale comes closest to the ancient legend. The films usually stay true to their source, from the missing left shoe to Hercules joining and leaving the voyage after the death of Hylous to the Golden Fleece being guarded by what usually referred to in the books as "a Dragon." In *Jason And The Argonauts* the dragon is one of Harryhausen's great stop-motion effects. In the Steve Reeves version of Hercules it's a guy in a rubber suit with the voice of Godzilla thrown in for a shocking roar. *Giants Of Thessaly* is another film with Jason as the basis but again the emphasis is on the men getting into trouble the prop department cooks up rather than on any history or legend.

Maciste. Now we get down to cases. Just who the hell is this guy anyway?!? After years of being an obscure name in these films, with hints to the character being "born from the mountain," the background of the character comes to light. Maciste was the hero in a 1914 Italian film called *Cabiria*, and played by Bartolomeo Pagano. So popular was this character that film after film was made of this former slave with incredible strength. For variety some films were made as comedies or mysteries featuring the strongman. As many as 29 movies about Maciste were made before 1928. The



Above Son of Samson *(1962) starring Mark Forest and Chelo Alonso.*
Below Steve Reeves and Chelo Alonso in Goliath and the Barbarians *(1959)*





original actor even took his famous character's name, and his death in 1947 didn't stop the character from living on. This character can't be overlooked as having some influence on the genesis of the Hercules films. And those first Hercules films apparently led to a renewed onslaught of Maciste adventures. That ironic twist would be lost on Americans who never knew Maciste. Ah, well; whatever the name, the game's the same. It's all one big happy brotherhood of do-gooding muscle-studs.

There are other legends and characters used in the films, such as the story of the Trojan Horse. And of Romulus and Remus, the brothers who founded what would become Rome. Enough legend and lore to satisfy the hunger of the most ardent history buff. For nearly a decade it was wonderful, just wonderful. You'd wish it could go on forever, but. .

So many films, all copies of one another, all dumped on the market in rapid-fire succession. Some of the later entries in the series really did do big box office. *Son Of Samson* reportedly earned more lira than any of the big Hollywood productions playing at the same time. But familiarity being what it is, and a restless audience always on the prowl for something New and Different—what can we say? All good things must come to an end. The Sword and Sandal film eventually overstayed its theatrical welcome.

In America, it was welcomed anew on the television screen, in a syndicated package known as "The Mighty Sons Of Hercules." Although many in fact never had an American theatrical release, they did find a home in our living rooms as part of that TV collection. There are even hints that a couple films might have been cranked out near the end of the craze, not for theaters, but entirely to fill the TV syndicator's orders. It was another boon to the genre since most of today's fans saw the films only on the tiny screen. The package would give the world the theme song about the Mighty Sons Of Hercules still intact on many of the video editions of the movies.

It's a genre of film that doesn't have much of a message other than, Sit Down And Have A Good Time. It's a genre that's a classic of the 1960s. It's a category of films that created stars, that created adventure, that created a great way to spend rainy afternoons. It's a genre of film that's been underestimated by many but outclassed by none.

(Next Issue! Stephen Flacassier will begin his in-depth survey of specific Sword And Sandal epics, accompanied by rare photos and ad art. Mr. Flacassier is author of the book, Muscles, Myths and Movies: An Acquired Taste On Video. *His synopsis/review notes have appeared on several hundred video-boxes released in the US. His new book on filmonsters is near completion.)*■

Poe Relations



This fine caricature of the theme and central characters of *The Pit and the Pendulum* was made specially for American International by noted artist Jack Manning.



Barbara Steele as she appeared in *The Pit and the Pendulum.*

by Brad Linaweaver

Ever since *The Jazz Singer* vitaphoned the silents out of business there has been a debate over how much talk is good for a moving picture. The camera was a mobile and versatile story teller when crude, early sound brought everything to a dead halt. Movies suddenly became static and stagebound. This problem only lasted for a few years. If Tod Browning's *Dracula* forgot it was a movie (after the first reel), James Whale's *Frankenstein* kept reminding us that a camera could move even while characters are talking. *King Kong* did as much with sound as it did with visuals. When Orson Welles came to RKO with his fabulous background in radio, he made sure that *Citizen Kane* sounded every bit as good as it looked.

So what does any of this have to do with Roger Corman's modestly budgeted film adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe and the impact they had on the 1960s? Well, the reader needs to know that I have nothing against *talking* pictures. I like movies that talk to me.

And here's a little confession: Corman's *The Masque Of The Red Death* (1964) is not only my favorite Poe film and not only my favorite Vincent Price film — it's my favorite horror film!!! When I admit this, I'm regarded as though I'm every bit as insane as one of Price's wife-haunted aristocrats. Don't I know that films of James Whale are better? Yes, I freely admit it. The films of Val Lewton? Superior in every way. What about Alfred Hitchcock's two horror films? Yes, they fly to a higher plane and cut through all opposition. Nor is torture necessary for me to admit that Price turned in his best performance in Michael Reeves' The Conqueror Worm (a.k.a., Witchfinder General). All I say is that Masque is my favorite. Even so, other Corman fans believe me mad. Don't I prefer his early, quirky black and white films? I like 'em fine. A Bucket Of Blood is another of my favorite films. (Lots of words in that one, too.) "But you can't prefer Masque to his other Poe films," the hard core cineastes insist. "The Pit And The Pendulum is more fun. The Raven is funnier. Tomb Ligeia is more cinematic..."

Stop! The dread word has been spoken: cinematic. They say Masque isn't cinematic enough because it's talky, pretentious and full of Bergman rip-offs. I love it because it's talky, pretentious and full of Bergman rip-offs. Hey, the Bergman bits help make it into a movie. Besides, they never say that Nicolas Roeg isn't cinematic!

The nay-sayers don't like Masque because of its literary and poetical conceits. I do. They don't like it because it's a movie that enlightened teachers and parents could recommend in that long ago year of 1964. I never could understand why that was a problem.

Finally, the biggest complaint seems to be that Roger Corman had the temerity to put artistic touches in a horror film. That sort of thing happened a lot in the sixties. Entertainment dared to



be a bit intellectual. Of course, if today's movies and television shows weren't so afraid of philosophy, the sixties stuff wouldn't seem so dated. The Prisoner is timeless as far as I'm concerned.

When the Price-Poe films were playing at the local drive-in, I thought it was great that my dad wanted to see them as much as I did. By the time I was dating, these pictures would be showing in packages of four and five films. But they really worked on me when they were fresh off the assembly line. They had class. And they helped give me a taste for theatricality.

Masque was the perfect sixties film because it addressed the moral ambiguities of the period. The world was changing so drastically that not even an evil aristocrat could hold it all together. But he could throw one last great party before everything literally went to hell.

The colors were as vivid and cleverly employed as anything in Fellini. The Price dialogue was priceless. . .and music to the ears of those of us who usually find the villain more entertaining than the hero. (The great thing about another sixties icon, James Bond, was that the hero had as many good one-liners as the villain.)

Masque delivered in all departments. Today's blood fests do little to top the sanguinary demise of Hazel Court at the talons of Prospero's falcon. There was an erotic tension between Price's satanic older man and the young, virginal Jane Asher that is remembered long after acres of R-rated skin are forgotten in today's slasher rituals. The fiery climax to the Hop Toad sequence sure seems like action to me! Besides, it affords Price one of his best lines when he says that the dwarf should be paid extra for his entertaining jest (i.e., burning an enemy alive). There's a lot going on in this movie.

Lots of sixties horror films gave us aristocratic character actors making ironic comments about the gruesome goings-on. Over at Hammer, Peter Cushing's Baron Frankenstein had many of his best lines in the sixties. Roger Corman wasn't about to waste Peter Lorre or Boris Karloff or Basil Rathbone or Lon Chaney on visuals alone when he had access to some of the greatest voices in horror film history. Ditto for Ray Milland. When Corman put these guys in his films, he knew how much the words mattered. The writers sure as hell knew. Lorre helped out with a few ad-libs!

When I attended my first Weird Night at Florida State University in 1971 (an annual all night horror marathon) I experienced something I'll never forget. The drunken college students laughed at the movies until the Lorre segment of Corman's *Tales of Terror*. His sarcasm was more powerful than theirs. Suddenly, they were laughing with the character instead of at him. The anger of his character overwhelmed them and they shut up and were quiet through the remaining films. Proof-positive that Corman hit the bullseye with that film.

The Poe films were both theatrical and cinematic. Corman cut corners, but not as many as in the black-and-white double bills for AIP. Sure, he still cheaped out when he didn't have to, but the final effect was not only good, it was damned better than anyone expected at the time.

House Of Usher was recommended by teachers. Is that so wrong?

The Pit And The Pendulum had one of the greatest climaxes in horror film history. (Fortunately, Orion Home Video/Image Entertainment has made a widescreen edition available on Laserdisc, presented in the original 2:35 to 1 scope aspect ratios.) When I had the opportunity to interview Barbara Steele for an upcoming issue of *Filmfax* (thanks to Fred Olen Ray inviting me on the set of his film, Prophet) her eyes lit up remembering Vincent Price and what a sheer joy it was playing his evil bride in that film.

Tales Of Terror brought Peter Lorre and Basil Rathbone into the fold. The last story was pretty scary. The "nearly liquid mass of loathsome, of detestable putridity" at the climax of "The Case of M. Valdemar" was worth the price of admission, even though no makeup effects could match the famous book illustrations by Harry Clarke.

The Raven felt like a collision between a horror film and Walt Disney. *Variety* loved it. I believe that even *Parents Magazine* recommended it. What a crime! Old-time AIP fans couldn't forgive their sleazy little company going legitimate. More tolerant horror fans didn't mind if normal human beings enjoyed this movie, not when they could enjoy the comic duel between Boris Karloff and Peter Lorre ("You're defending yourself, you coward!") as a warm up to the climatic duel between Karloff and Vincent Price.

The Haunted Palace, although presented as a Poe film, was really the first feature film adaptation of H. P. Lovecraft (as detailed in my article in *Cult Movies* #18). Lon Chaney had one of his finest roles of the sixties. Best of all, Price had some more great lines, including the immortal: "That's what I like about you New Englanders. You're so friendly." My only criticism of this film is that the AIP moguls should have brought Paul Blaisdell back to design the monster in the pit. It was a missed opportunity.

The *Masque Of The Red Death* was shot in wicked old England instead of Hollywood. Corman used sets left over from Becket. Who the hell does he think he is? Some ar-toooor filmmaker? Price relishes the dialogue and a bigger vocabulary than any other part in the series. Who does he think he is? Is this movie trying to educate us or something? When he tells Jane Asher that he'll take her hand and lead her "through the cruel light into the velvet darkness," what's that supposed to mean, huh? And that bit about each man creating his own heaven and his own hell — hey, if I want religion I'll go to church instead of the drive-in. Belch!

The knee-jerkers who hate this movie should be happy with today's horror films. We'll never see a movie like Masque ever again. Instead of complaining that Corman injected art into a horror film they should see it the other way around: Corman slipped horror into an art film.

The Tomb Of Ligeia has been rightly compared to Hitchcock. The fox hunt that opens the film is actually superior to a similar scene in *Marnie*. The use of the English countryside is effective through-

(continued)



MOMENT OF TERROR — Basil Rathbone and Debra Paget



MASTER TERROR TRIO — Vincent Price, Peter Lorre and Basil Rathbone, Hollywood's masters of terror, horror and thrills, co-star together for the first time in American International's "Poe's Tales of Terror," opening at the Theatre. Debra Paget also stars in the Panavision and color trilogy







out. Of course, it's too cinematic. (Just kidding.) This film may be the most beautiful Corman ever did. It provided Price with an opportunity to wear some really cool sunglasses. It's the most sensitive treatment of necrophilia ever committed to film (now there's an endorsement). And it sums up the series in terms of an old joke.

First guy: My wife's an angel.

Second guy: Mine's still alive.

The major studios didn't know how to respond to the 1960s youth rebellion. The warning signs were up long before 'Nam brought everything to an explosive head. How ironic that AIP, the little outfit that made a fortune pandering to teenagers, gave the Establishment its best soapbox in the aristocratic characters of its prestige horror films. The Poe films weren't interested in the youthful heroes; they cared about the aristocrats trapped by a horrible fate.

These films weren't political but they captured the sensibility of Poe, a man who despised democracy. The movies were out of step with the times and that's why they helped influence the times. The snob critics thought they were travesties of Poe. I thought then as I do now — this series captured the spirit of Poe with brilliance. And I've been reading Poe since I was ten years old.

Finally, the dream sequences of each Poe film prepared my generation for the psychedelic LSD period only a few years away. Corman's *The Trip* was only effective when it referenced his Poe films! Sure he was saving money. But I knew people who dropped acid and entered similar gothic territory. They weren't worried about a budget. Corman, Price and Poe became part of the interior mental landscape of the sixties.

We were influenced more deeply than we'll ever know.

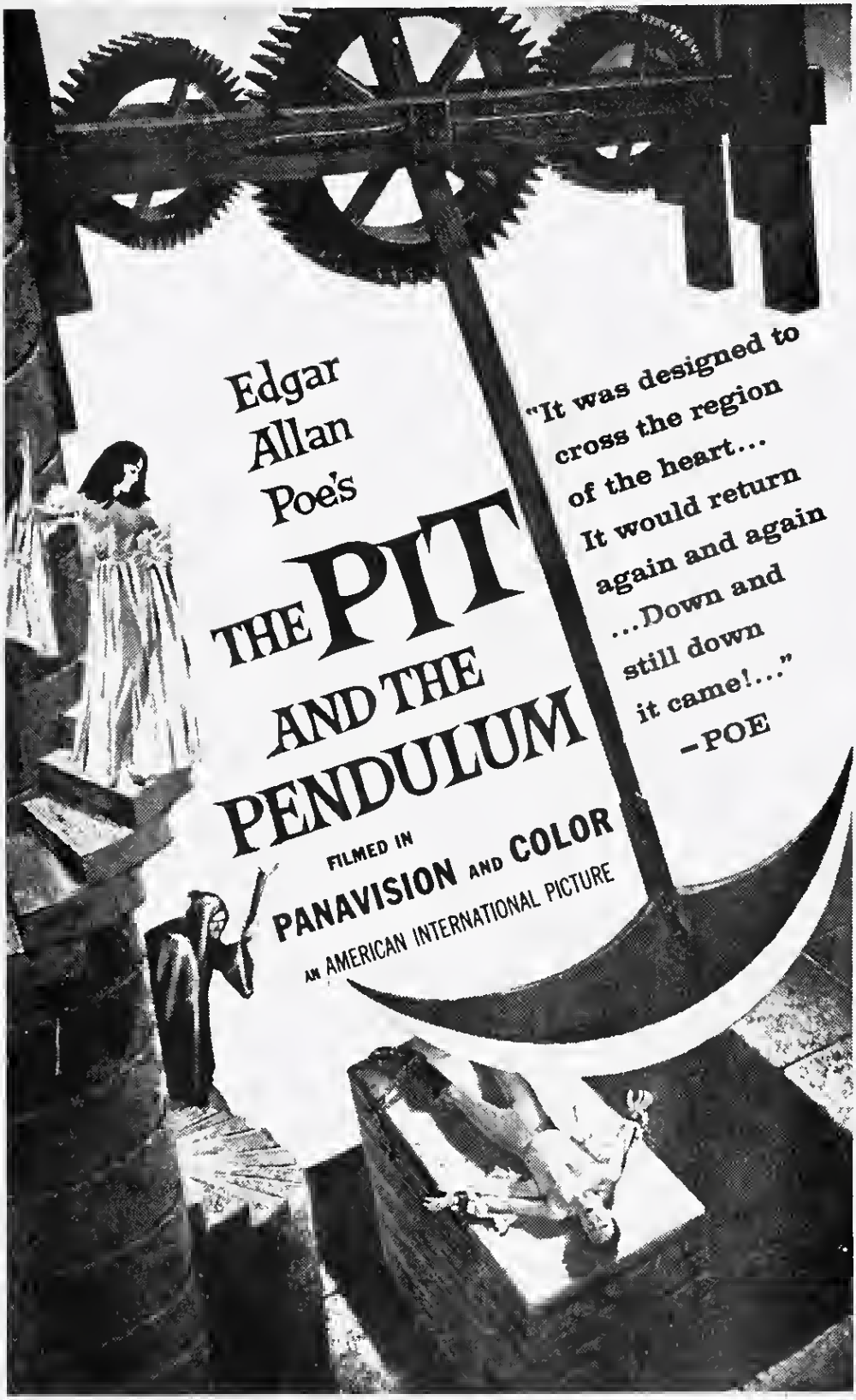
(Brad Linaweaver interviewed Roger Corman for the late, lamented Wonder *magazine. He has a Bachelor of Arts from Florida State University and a Master's degree from Rollins College.)* ■

PHANTOM VIDEO



UNCUT/UNCENSORED Horror, sleaze, cult & sexploitation imports, rarities & bizarre films on VHS. Psychedelic & X-Rated erotic horror, S&M, infamous & obscure imports. For our 1997 catalog send $2 to:

PHANTOM VIDEO
P.O. Box 7301, Jupiter, FL 33468





©1964 American International Pictures



HEROIC RESCUE — Vincent Price carries Elizabeth Shepherd, who has injured her ankle, to his home in a scene from American International's new Poe terror production "The Tomb of Ligeia" opening at the ..... Theatre on .....

2 COL. SCENE MAT 2-B

NEW AIP POE THRILLER OPENS HERE TOMORROW

The newest in American International's series of Poe terror films 'Tomb of Ligeia' opens at the ..... Theatre on .....

Starring Vincent Price and a new English beauty, Elizabeth Shepherd, the spine-tingling drama is the story of a woman so evil that her will survives her death and terrorizes her widower and the girl he later marries.

Filmed in Color and Scope on location in a 1000-year-old English abbey, 'Tomb of Ligeia' is the eighth AIP film based upon the classic works of Edgar Allan Poe. All are the directorial work of Roger Corman. The screenplay is by Robert Towne.



SPECIAL "EXCLUSIVE" CARICATURE FOR YOUR CITY

This fine caricature based on "Masque of Red Death" was made especially for American International by noted artist Jack Manning. The maximum use should be as a FRONT COVER of a Sunday supplement section. It also can be used in any size as an unusual and selling piece of art on the main movie page in advance of your opening. This is a strong attraction for any newspaper Sunday editor and is promotion art that will have no competition. Glossy copies, with appropriate caption, available upon request from Publicity Department, American International Pictures.



DIRECTOR AND ACTRESS — Director Roger Cormen, who has been at the helm of each of American International's eight hit terror productions based upon the works of Edgar Allan Poe, discusses a scene with his new English "find" Elizabeth Shepherd during filming of "Tomb of Ligeia." Corman contends his horror films in Color and Scope are "quality" entertainment for egg heads as well as the masses.



SORCERY AND WITCHES FLOURISHING BUSINESS IN JOLLY OLD ENGLAND

In the sixteen forties, when Matthew Hopkins, Oliver Cromwell's self-appointed "Witchfinder General," stalked his evil and sinister way through the towns and villages of Eastern England, the practice of witchcraft was a crime punishable by death.

Hopkins, whose story has now been brought vividly to the screen in American International's horror - thriller, "The Conqueror Worm," which comes on ..... to the ..... Theatre, and stars Vincent Price, used this fact to his own profit and agrandisement, by branding many innocent Roman Catholics as "witches" and putting them to agonising torture and death by hanging and burning.

A lawyer himself, he was careful to keep within the law.

In two years, he destroyed over 200 persons, ostensibly as witches, but in reality because they were, in Cromwellian eyes, "Papists and idolators." There were few genuine witches among them.

He could not do it today. In 1735, an enlightened Parliament passed the "Witchcraft Act," which forbade prosecutions for "witchcraft, sorcery or enchantment." It has never been revoked.

The last persons to be arraigned for witchcraft in England were Jane Clerk and her son and daughter, of Great Wigston, Leicestershire, in 1717. They were acquitted.

The last person actually to be executed for the offense was Alicia Molland, of Exeter, Devon, in 1684, thirty-seven years after Matthew Hopkins had ceased his dread operations.

Since those days, witches, wizards and sorcerers have flourished in England with impunity. Today, it is estimated, more witchcraft — and its more sinister corollary, Black Magic — is practiced in Great Britain than during the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.



PROFESSIONAL SEDUCTRESS: Maggie Nolan portrays one of the most beauteous of the free-and-easy women who figure in the plot of "The Conqueror Worm."



DIABOLICAL TORTURE CHAMBER: Petite Hilary Dwyer and Ian Ogilvy (right) undergo inhuman torture at the hands of torture chamber custodian Robert Russell in this scene from Edgar Allan Poe's horror-thriller, "The Conqueror Worm," American International release which begins at the ..... Theatre on .....



Kay Parker: Return Engagement

Interview by Ted Okuda

Due to the favorable reader response to Titus Moody's interview with Kay Parker in issue #19 of *Cult Movies*, editor Michael Copner requested additional coverage of the much-admired Ms. Parker.

Kay Parker made her explicit-adult film debut in the late 1970s and quickly rose to the rank of major star in the X-rated industry. Her career spanned almost a decade, and even though she made far fewer films than most of her contemporaries, she won countless awards for her roles and received constant recognition for her quality performances and for her work as an ambassador for the Adult Film Industry.

Kay was unique in that she was, first and foremost, an *actress*. Her performances are distinguished by an emotional intensity that was (and still is) rare in X-rated movies. The genuine passion Kay brought to her roles made her performances stand out in stark contrast to the sexual ciphers usually found in these pictures; her best films include *Taboo* (1980), *Taboo II* (1982), *Sex World* (1977), *Chorus Call* (1978), *Body Talk* (1982), *Downstairs/Upstairs* (1980).

A reviewer once stated that, "Kay Parker has single-handedly elevated the rank of porn star from 'slut' to 'actress.'" Actor/agent/historian Bill Margold calls her "The Queen." *Adam Film World* magazine has noted, "Her real talent is in her acting and her aura of well-bred elegance... She never fails to give a performance that combines intense sensuality and class." *Adult Video News' 1995 Entertainment Guide* refers to Kay as "the industry's all-time class act."

A popular speaker on the lecture circuit, Kay speaks freely of her career as a porno star as part of her life's journey. Dr. Paul R. Ambramson, Ph.D. of UCLA, calls her, "A porn star and social critic who is fully capable of challenging conventional morality with refinement and grace... Kay Parker, in essence, treads where few have gone, and few remain."

As a counselor, lecturer, writer, mediator and actress, Kay has worked tirelessly in the realm of consciousness raising for the last 20 years. She is founder of "Alliance For Harmony" and co-founder of "Pleiadian Crystal Vortex," endeavors which are dedicated to consciousness raising and Global transformation.

Kay is also working on her autobiography, which she refers to as "a story which spans 6,000 years."

Cult Movies: Let's begin with the obvious question. How did you get involved in X-rated films?

Kay Parker: I was with a little improvisational acting group, I met [adult film star] John Leslie and we struck up a friendship. John told me he was an actor, although at first I didn't know what kind of actor. I didn't find out until he called me one day and asked if I would like the opportunity to stand in front of a camera and actually do some work. I was a little suspicious [laughs] and at that point I said, "Wait a minute—what kind of acting is this?" When I learned it was for an X-rated movie, my first reaction was, "No—absolutely no—a million times, no." But, obviously, there was another voice inside me that won out.

CM: What was your first experience in adult films like?

KP: I played the part of the madame in *V, The Hot One* (1977), it was a non-sex role, and I just had a couple lines of dialogue. And my experience of meeting the director, Robert McCallum, was very pleasant. Robert is a neat, all-American, California type of guy, so I was surprised; I thought he was going to be your stereotypical porno producer. And this film put me on a movie set, which I had never experienced before. I was immediately intrigued with filmmaking.

CM: And how did this lead to hardcore roles?

KP: About two weeks after I did *V, The Hot One*, I got another call from John Leslie saying that there was another noted director who was casting for a big-budget film, and did I want to go in and read for a part? John felt that there would be a part for me that could go either way—it could be either be a sex or a non-sex role. However, once I met with the director, Anthony Spinelli, he felt that it definitely had to be a sex role. He had to fill his quota of sex scenes in the movie.



Again, dual voices were operating inside me, one which said, "Just leave now and never come back." But the other voice was intrigued, and was already sort of peeling off my clothes and getting free. That's what it really represented for me at that time: an opportunity to discard a lot of my inhibitions and reservations and get free. In retrospect it was as if I had to get naked (inside and out, as it were) to begin my conscious spiritual journey.

The turning point was when Spinelli acknowledged me and said, "You'd be great for this role"—then the die was cast. It didn't occur to me until much later, when I was working on my autobiography, that this was my old co-dependent pattern of behavior (born of a Father who was emotionally unavailable), of being approved by a man and therefore making myself immediately available. When someone approved of me, I was theirs. So I jumped at the role, which was for *Sex World* (1977), a very big budget film by porn standards.

CM: Your success in the industry was immediate.

KP: I think one thing that really worked for me was the fact that I was older than most of the other women. There was great receptivity to me because of the era—it was a baby industry and they were looking for actors. It was the perfect time to be getting into the business.

CM: You were certainly one of the few who could tackle mature roles.

KP: I suppose—well, let's put it this way: there were plenty of actresses for the younger, ingenue roles, but if producers were looking for an older woman, there were, at that time, fewer actresses to choose from.

CM: And since you actually had acting experience, your roles were more demanding in terms of dialogue and character interpretation.

KP: Definitely. It's a funny thing to say, but if one were to do a study of the amount of sex that I actually performed, it was very little when you compare it to the other people. It was certainly minimal—compared to the standard requirements then or today. It wasn't a large "body"—shall we say—of sex that I performed.

CM: When you began appearing in X-rated movies, there was more of an effort to give the films a degree of production value.

KP: Yes. I think in those earlier years, there was much more quality to the product we were turning out. I mean, they were *films*, with considerable budgets compared to the videos being produced by the industry today. And, for the most part, they had scripts.

CM: Speaking of substantial scripts, your most famous film is Taboo, in which you play a single parent who has an incestuous relationship with her young son [played by Mike Ranger]. It's still an amazingly popular title.

KP: I think that one of the primary reasons that particular film became so successful is because of the intensity of the love scene between Mike and myself. That was genuine passion.

I had only seen a few X-rated films at that point, but I noticed that the actor's characterizations ended as soon as the sex began. Now, perhaps there were times when I took my acting too seriously, but I always felt that you could and should stay in character during a sex scene as well. I felt that it would only serve to make the scene and the overall film much better. I think the popularity of that first *Taboo* bears me out.

I'm proud of the fact that *Taboo* has become something of a cult item. Video store owners have told me they've had a hard time keeping it on the shelves. It's a brisk seller, and it even gets stolen more than any other title. [laughs]

CM: It's interesting to note that, unlike many porno films of the '70s and early '80s, a number of your movies, such as *Taboo I* and *II*, *Seven Into Snowy* (1977), *L'Amour* (1984) and others are still on the market.

KP: Yes, I was just having a conversation with Juliet Anderson [the adult film actress also known as "Aunt Peg"], and she mentioned that she has a friend who works at a local video store. He marvels at how much the films Juliet and I made are still requested. It's amazing how our popularity has sustained after all these years.

CM: Ironically, the video revolution that helped to make adult movies more accessible also contributed to their dwindling quality. Was this a contributing factor in your decision to retire from adult films?

KP: It definitely played a big part. At that point, I was over 40 and it was time for me to get out. Plus, AIDS was upon us.

That was during the birth of the video industry. I had done a couple of videos, everyone was still learning about video—we were literally learning as we were going because nobody really knew about lighting for video and other technical aspects. Well, I didn't like this new medium at all, you had to shoot everything so fast and the budgets suddenly plummeted. Almost overnight it became a totally different industry, one that left nothing to be desired for me. But this was the new medium and everyone was forced to jump on the bandwagon.

I made one video called *Spectators* (1985) and I hated doing it so much that I actually had an asthma attack. I was in such resistance—the truth of the matter was I hated what I saw happening. Right after that I said, "That's it, no more for me." I knew what was coming. I saw the writing on the wall and I wasn't about to struggle with it. There's a certain grace in recognizing when it's time to move on.

CM: Yet you still retained some connection with the industry.

KP: Initially, yes. When I quit I went to work for Caballero, which was then one of the biggest distributor/manufacturers of adult films and videos. I went to work for them as a PR director and that was a good segue for me—and it made the transition easier and it just softened the blow. I felt very fortunate in that respect. And it also confirmed that I had made the right decision.

I made one more film after that, which was really my swan song: *Careful, He May Be Watching* (1987) with Seka. I had never done a scene with Seka before, so it was kind of neat that she was the last one—a nice way to make a final exit.

CM: The advent of videotape had a huge effect on the industry, while the technology made the product more accessible, it also resulted in a decline in quality.

KP: It was such a radical shift, you couldn't fight it. Suddenly, not only was there a plethora of videos being made, but all existing films were transferred to video and there was this huge glut of material. I remember as PR director we were putting out an unbelievable number of

titles each month, and we had such great competition from other distributors

I think that there was a point where the industry could have regulated itself and avoided such a radical departure from quality and substance, but it would have taken collaboration and putting aside a lot of their own greed In other words, it would have required them to do something they weren't capable of doing

At the time, there was some kind of producers' organization and I went to a few of the meetings I was still being used as a spokesperson for the industry—I was called upon constantly—and I would go out and support the industry using money out of my own pocket But it finally occurred to me that no one from the industry was supporting me I began to think, "What am I getting out of this?" It was becoming old hat

So I went to these producers' meetings to see how willing they were to communicate with each other, to align with each other, to be allies But there was such a rift, it was laughable I decided to get up and say something personally I told them "This is why I'm here I would love to see you guys get together so that we could maintain a certain level of quality " but it was totally falling on deaf ears Then I said, "By that same token you guys know that I'm one of the first people whom the media calls on during TV and radio ratings periods when someone needs to speak on behalf of the industry Now, I don't know if any of you are aware of how much of this I've been doing " Again, there were blank looks So I said, "And so I wanted to see how all of you feel about this If you'd like me to continue, I'd like some support — at least so that my expenses are covered." One producer threw a five dollar bill on the table, and that was that I got up and left "Okay, I have my answer Thank you, I'm out of here " It didn't need to be any clearer to me in that moment what level of consciousness with which I was dealing

CM Did everyone have this indifferent attitude?

KP No, and let me stress that point There were and are individuals who really go way out on a limb to support things But it's also a whole different venue these days The needs of the actors, producers, and technicians are different from what they used to be because everything's changed so erratically So whoever's fighting the good fight these days is doing it for different reasons By that point I was already into my next phase of expression and this was just another sign that it was time to take my quantum leap and put up my counselor shingle

CM In your previous *Cult Movies* interview you mentioned your involvement with "holistic counseling " Would you elaborate on the subject?

KP Holistic meaning to make whole, through mind-body spirit and I add to that soul connection What does that mean? Well, to make that connection one has to look at all the ways they render themselves "un-whole"—less than totally empowered I want to help people be all they can be Many people are living lives that were designed from beliefs, whether family, cultural, religious, that are so far removed from their true desires—it truly amazes me

The basis of my counseling is about responsibility I won't work with people who are intent on blaming others or lamenting their victimhood—in other words those I work with usually have some kind of "human potential" background or spiritual study Responsibility means "the ability to respond to" anything in our lives and would require owning our creations I find that there are still so many people who want to shrink away from that responsibility and so I tell them, "I'm not the counselor for you " Owning our creations is so freeing and so empowering, I personally can't imagine living any other way With that we take dominion over our lives and our purpose and destiny becomes clearer

CM And how did your early years affect your present being?

KP Well, I was born in Birmingham, which is in the northern part of England It was a highly industrial area that was bombed to smithereens during World War II, though it's since been rebuilt as a very modern city I grew up during the postwar era, and I had a tough childhood There was so little of everything, and I remember such dour somber energy all around me But I also remember feeling early on that I really didn't belong there It's curious that a child so young would have feelings like this, but I've always had this sense of not belonging And yet I had this voice inside telling me that I was special, not meaning better or superior, but special Later on down the road, I thought this has to be because I may one of a handful of people on this planet who is choosing to go all the way in terms of becoming enlightened

Even more recently, I know my commitment and dedication goes deeper than I realized I've arrived at that fact through many diverse experiences, the most amazing being past life exploration, which has revealed more than I ever hoped for and really gave me an understanding as to what my purpose is in this life

I often ask people, "What is your vocation?" When they start telling me about their job, I say, "No, your vocation " Vocation comes from the Latin Vocare, which means calling Yet most people don't have a clue what I'm referring to because they don't have an identity beyond their jobs We place too much emphasis on status symbols jobs, cars, houses You've got to learn to give up your possessions; by that I mean give up your emotional attachment to your possessions People have too much of their emotions invested in those things

The old cliché that money isn't everything is definitely true I've met some very wealthy individuals and their money hasn't been a cure-all, they still have their challenges

I tell people please don't take anything for granted Just be grateful for life and love and the ability to communicate with people

(Kay Parker can be reached through her fan club Five K Sales, 1122 White Rock, Dixon, Illinois 61021-9049, website www clubblue.com)

******

THE NEW RIGHTS OF PASSAGE
A Message For The New Age
By Kay Parker

What an interesting time to be alive! Can anyone deny that life's challenges have changed so dramatically in a very short time and will undoubtedly change even more for the incoming generation As I'm writing this piece, it is just a few weeks after the Heaven's Gate incident The "experts" are saying that we are likely to see more and more of this kind of activity Why? I believe that in order to answer that question we have to look more broadly at what is going on in our world

The writing is on the proverbial Wall History always repeats itself Times are requiring collective choices—Light or Darkness, Fear or Trust, Anger and Rage or Forgiveness and Responsibility Are ET's here to assist or harm us? *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* or *Independence Day*? But since we know, surely we know by now, that whatever thoughts we entertain are perpetuated in our world, the only thoughts which make sense are positive ones It's a simple choice, isn't it? Apropos to this, I just finished reading Michael Crichton's book Sphere There's a powerful message in that story about the power of thought

So, on the negative side there are suicide bombings and terrorist threats, disease and pestilence and government cover-ups and deceit seem to be the norm Money and greed still rule and ruin people's lives In the media there are movies about aliens destroying our world, taking over, threat after threat, and TV programs examining ET phenomena from every which angle And, it seems there are only a few people really paying attention to the very apparent change in global weather patterns To top it all off there are extraordinary numbers of "fear mongers"—people who continue to perpetuate fear, hatred and doom and gloom Unmistakably, fear is our worst enemy Fear perpetuates fear!!

On the other hand we have the crop circles (which I believe to be a collaboration between Gaia—the earth spirits—and Ets), and let's not forget the Pyramids and the obvious signs all over the planet which to me clearly indicate that we are not and never have been "alone "South of the border and all over the globe, hundreds of thousands of UFO sightings have and continue to be reported, a man in Switzerland by the name of Billy Meier, probably now the most famous visitee by UFOs, has been visited for years and has much recorded on his experiences Art Bell, who has a radio show and Web page dealing with all kinds of UFO information and other cutting edge subject matter attracts extraordinary numbers of listeners

What used to be called New Age has quite clearly gone mainstream, propelled there by the likes of James Redfield and his esoteric adventure story, "The Celestine Prophecy," and, one of my heroes, Deepak Chopra, who (along with other notable original thinkers) has bridged the gap between Western medicine and Eastern philosophy We have TV shows like *Touched By An Angel* and *3rd Rock From The Sun* which mirrore to us our human foibles as well as our good points *Star Trek* and all its spin-offs, blasts us into the future (where I believe fragments of many of us already exist) and offer us an opportunity to creatively imagine where we're going What a visionary Gene Roddenberry was It's obvious to me that he was tapping into other dimensional reality George Lucas knows too, after two decades, the Star Wars trilogy still holds its own against all the other sci-fi epics we've seen lately What about a re-release of Close Encounters and E T on the big screen, Steven?

The numbers of people searching for spiritual connection and significance in life are multiplying by the thousands as institutions crumble and heroes fall

I began channeling in 1989—spontaneously, at a meditation group I was particularly relaxed, in a deep state of surrender Words in the form of a statement, a message, began to come out of my mouth From where the message came, I didn't know It wasn't from me, this wasn't necessarily how I normally would speak and so, logically, I figured that it was a "Higher Consciousness"—but whose? Along the way, as I continued to deliver messages to those who were interested, as we would ask who this was, we were told "The Seventh Ray" or "The Purple Ray" or "The Great White Brotherhood " Cool! But that still didn't tell me much, although I know that the Seventh or Purple Ray was a healing frequency and delivered messages about healing and balancing, moving those in attendance to tears and states of great self-reverence The "GWB" (as I called the Brotherhood), I later read in a book, is the Order Of Melchizadek, which is an ancient and very high etheric Brotherhood Priests of this ancient lineage seldom incarnated and when they did, it was for the purpose of great human transformation Christ was such a priest The Buddha was another Messages from GWB were about releasing karma and lifting of consciousness I have spent hundreds of hours transcribing these messages

Over the years, as I've grown into my "other" persona and my work has blossomed, I have felt less need to name energies I channel, energies which are pure and evolved, trans-dimensional, true "Cosmic Consciousness "

It became obvious that a specific guide was filtering information through me My friend knew this was her guide and its name came to her intuitively Naturally "Enil" was a Pleiadian guide With this experience a whole new area of discovery opened Several other inter-dimensional guides have availed themselves to me since then They were part of a specific mission, assisting the paradigm shift which we on Earth are collectively experiencing In order to pen to the frequencies, I had to "lighten up" even more, and more deeply heal my own past I had to learn more about the true meaning of surrender and vulnerability, confront all my fears and resistance and trust more deeply than ever the path I was on To do this has required sacrifice, a parting with linear thoughts and ideas about how to "do" life I now totally embrace miracles, magic, absolute responsibility and unconditional love as my lifestyle To accomplish this I've dug into past lives with a passion to understand why I'm here What is my Karma? What did I promise or contract to do? What is my destiny and am I on track?

Since the latter part of 1996, there has been a further intensification of energies for me and others within the conscious Aquarian community We focus on Global healing The evolution of our little planet plays a pivotal part in a Universal transformation process underway The human race is evolving from third to fourth dimensional reality Our very molecular structure is changing It would seem that our ET allies are working with us to help in this transition In this direction we must confront our deepest issue, our parents, our addictions and our shame, to fully accept where we are now and move forward with a new perspective

My new brochure reads "Celebration, A Multi-dimensional Approach To Life and New Rites Of Passage " It's a thrill to assist people and adventure into new dimensions of truth and passion When I'm counseling people, I tell them at the very onset of our sessions, "Fasten your seat belt, get ready to soar into the new Millennium!"

(For those who might be interested in a phone consultation, Kay Parker can be contacted via website www clubblue com Or write to Alliance For Harmony, PO Box 407, Santa Monica, CA 90406) ■

William Castle
Master of Exploitation

By popular demand we present a montage of William Castle pressbooks and ads. Whether you love or hate his many films, there is no denying that he was the master of the gimmick.

At times he had aspirations to be another Hitchcock, even if only a low-rent version. But, Castle will always be remembered for his crazy stunts like 'Emergo' from House On Haunted Hill and 'Percepto' from The Tingler.

Was William Castle a good filmmaker? Or just a huckster? You be the judge after looking over these pages to decide the fate of Mr. Castle. Will it be thumbs up or thumbs down?

–Buddy Barnett



'PUNISHMENT POLL' STORIES

Plant the following stories in local papers the day the Punishment Poll Activator Booth is set up in your theatre lobby, and prior to your playdate:

(GOT A GRUDGE?)

Got a grudge against movie monsters? Here's your chance to get even; at least with Sardonicus, the masked menace of Columbia Pictures' "Mr. Sardonicus," coming ..... to the ....Theatre. William Castle, that master of malevolence who produced and directed "Mr. Sardonicus" for a maximum of goose bumps and spine-tingling chills, has thoughtfully dreamed up a built-in audience participation gimmick that gives audiences a chance to square accounts for all those frightening moments spent in the dark (of a movie theatre).

If you want to, Castle ghoulishly points out, you can dish out more punishment to the dark-hearted Mr. Sardonicus by merely waving a "Punishment Poll" ballot complete with luminous thumb, downward! On the other hand, if you're an angel of mercy—you merely have to tilt the thumb upwards, to call a halt to Sardonicus' punishment.

Majority rules, of course!

(THUMBS DOWN!)

Movie fans! Have you ever envied the thrill-hungry Roman crowds in the Circus Maximus who, with a wave of the thumb, could make life-and-death decisions that sealed the fate of many a gladiator? Well, William Castle, producer and director of "Mr. Sardonicus," coming ..... to the ..... Theatre, has happily put the fate of that ghoulish character, Sardonicus, in your tender little hands. After witnessing Sardonicus, the masked monster, indulge his passion for torture, mayhem, cruelty and general low-down villainy, you have the opportunity of literally deciding the fiend's fate.

This can be done via Castle's latest audience participation innovation, the "Punishment Poll," wherein moviegoers will literally get a chance to turn "thumbs down" on Sardonicus so he can get his just deserts. Persons of tender sensibilities can call a halt to the fiend's agony by turning "thumbs up." Majority rules, of course! A cute aspect of the "Punishment Poll" is that it's all done in the dark with luminous thumbs activated in a special "Activator Booth."

News About

EMERGO

PRODUCER-DIRECTOR EXPLAINS NEED FOR THEATRE GIMMICK

by WILLIAM CASTLE

(Producer-director of Allied Artists' "House On Haunted Hill")

Showmanship, as proven by the late Mike Todd, is one of the keynotes to successful motion picture making. The time is behind us when motion pictures did well in spite of themselves and the public lined up at the boxoffice.

There are many reasons. Television became an arch enemy of films, and the public no longer flocked to see them. In spite of their age motion pictures did not grow. The equipment for making them was almost as obsolete as their advertising, which hadn't changed in three decades. People read promises and were disappointed time and time again. Good pictures were far and few between, and word-of-mouth was not good enough to lure audiences away from their television sets.

The motion picture industry reached a crisis. Boxoffice receipts were lower than ever before. Something was necessary, a stimulant. A Barnum technique was needed.

As a student of boxoffice for many years, I felt I had the answer. I was bold, and friends told me I was foolhardy, but I suddenly left for London.

While there I contacted the conservative Lloyds of London and requested an insurance policy. They were quite agreeable until I said that I wanted to insure everyone in the world for one thousand dollars against death by fright. The staid Lloyds of London blew its stack, but after two weeks, I came to America with the insurance policy.

This became the most important part of the international campaign on "Macabre." Every person buying a ticket and going into the theatre received an insurance policy. The result exceeded my greatest expectations and proved a very valuable exploitation point.

Exhibitors asked me to follow with another picture. How to top myself was a problem. I didn't want to repeat. I wanted something new and fresh. I decided upon a good old-fashioned ghost story, which hadn't been done on the screen since the "Bat," "Cat and the Canary" and "Last Warning." I called my friend Vincent Price who had successfully made many of these pictures. He became excited at the mention of doing a ghost story, and "House on Haunted Hill" had its star. As we worked, we pulled out all the stops We have sliding hands, skeletons and ghostly apparitions, and now something new, "Emergo." It now is seen at the . . . . theatre.



HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL MAT NO. 4

William Castle, who produced and directed "House On Haunted Hill" for Allied Artists, also created EMERGO, new patented theatre device which hurls flying objects through the theatre during the screening of this ghost story. Both the film and EMERGO now may be seen at the . . . . . theatre.

I put Herman Townsley, a top-flight engineer, to work; and after several months at the drawing board he built the first "Emergo" kit Result: With the aid of electronics, illuminated objects leave the screen, float over the audience and return to the screen to continue in their role in the picture.

Briefly, the way this happens is that the objects, through "Emergo," are controlled by dual motors With split second timing, a button is pushed and guided by two wires, the objects shoot out the desired distance. The entire device is controlled in the projection booth.

There will be hundreds of these kits manufactured and sent to theatres throughout the country And again the major part of our campaign will be a device; This time it is "Emergo," a new dimension in fright. The terror zooms right out at you.

Theatre Using New Gimmick

EMERGO is a brand new patented theatre device. Used in conjunction with producer-director William Castle's "House On Haunted Hill" for Allied Artists, it projects brightly lighted flying objects, an integral part of the picture, from the screen out over the audience

The mechanism is operated from the projection booth. When the climactic scene in the picture appears on the screen, a switch is thrown. This activates an electric motor (1/20 horsepower) which starts the plastic objects moving along a wire stretched between the projectionist's booth and the screen.

The movement of the flying objects is synchronized with the action on screen so that the story is continued without interruption. Although the wires stretch from the screen arch to booth, the objects' trip is limited to seventy feet each way. They could, of course, make the full journey but this would break the continuity of the story.

Before they begin their journey, the objects are in a cloth-draped cage, suspended from the wire. When the motor is started the drapes open automatically, and when the objects return they close again

EMERGO is now seen at the . . . . . theatre.

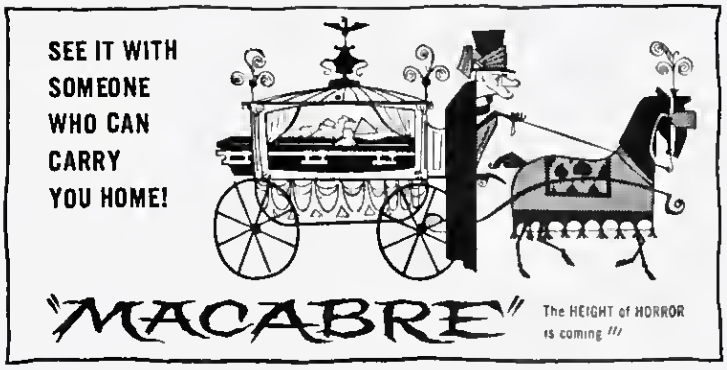
STARTLING

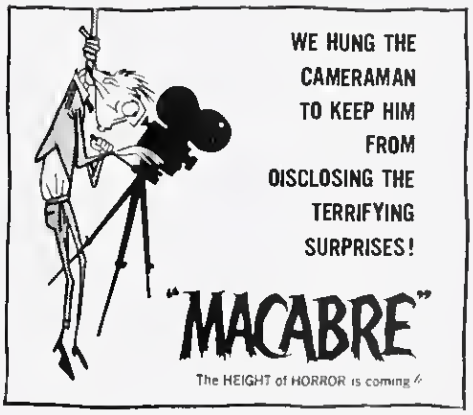
EMERGO, more startling than 3-D, is the newest screen device and is used in connection with the screening of "House On Haunted Hill," of which it actually is a part. Electrically operated, it hurls flying objects throughout the theatre auditorium. It was created by William Castle, producer-director of the ghost story for Allied Artists which now is at the . . . . . theatre





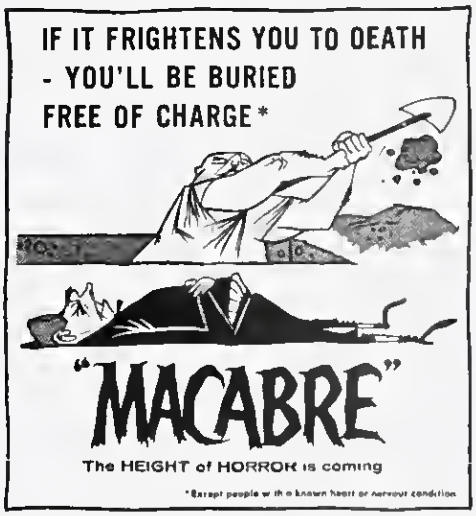




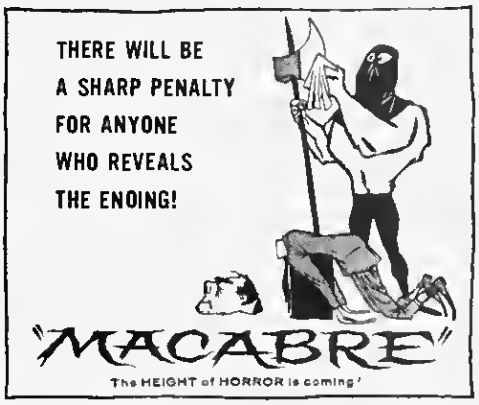


A UNIQUE CAMPAIGN FOR A UNIQUE MOVIE!

Leading showmen have hailed these ads as one of the most unusual campaigns ever devised for this type of picture. WE STRONGLY URGE THAT YOU SET UP A TEASER CAMPAIGN WELL IN ADVANCE OF YOUR PLAYDATE. PLEASE GIVE STRONG CONSIDERATION ALSO TO USING THEM "RUN OF PAPER" AS WELL AS ON THE DRAMA PAGES. It is our recommendation that the ads on this page be used up to and including day before opening rather than using conventional advance ads. On opening day, use one of the other ads featuring the insurance policy.









13 'GHOST' STUNTS

1. Send an usher through town draped in a sheet (conjuring up a ghost) with the following sign: "If You're Scared of 1 Ghost, Wait Until You See '13 Ghosts' Coming to the State Theatre."

2. Secret writing gag using invisible ink, in a special mailing.

3. Dress your ushers in black costumes that cover them from head to feet, allowing peep holes for eyes. On the backs of the costumes, paint white skeletons.

4. Rig up a dancing ghost for display in the darkest corner of your lobby, with a green spot playing on the figure.

5. In "13 Ghosts," the principals take part in a seance designed to show the actual presence of ghosts. If there is a well-known spiritualist in your area, prevail upon him to conduct a like seance. Arrange for TV and newspaper coverage, with credits for the picture.

6. Nurse in attendance, handing out smelling salts to the ladies as they enter the theatre.

7. Eerie cries and screeches, ideal for mystery pictures, can be obtained for playing over the p.a. system. Order Record 4028 A from Thomas J. Valentino, Inc., 150 West 46th Street, New York 36, N. Y.

8. Big Money Stunt. In '13 Ghosts," the finding of $100 bills is an important part of the story. Plant stage money throughout town and award free tickets to people finding the bills.

9. Hold a special "Spook Night" showing of "13 Ghosts," at midnight, and award prizes to bravest viewers.

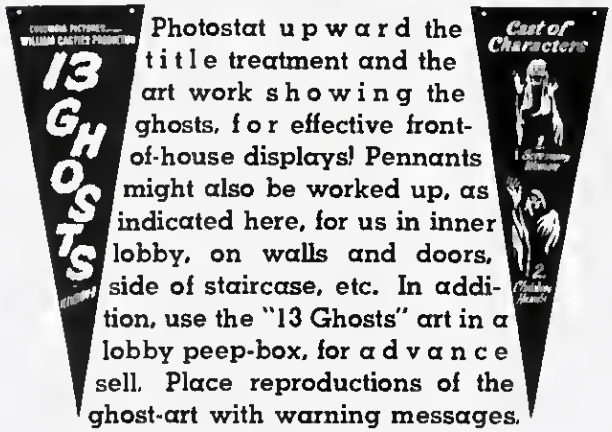
10. Ask your local library to set up a special display of collected ghost stories by Wilkie Collins, Conan Doyle and other writers of tales of the supernatural. Obtain credits and see that stills from "13 Ghosts" are used in the display.

11. Dress up your theatre in an eerie atmosphere, replete with skeletons, ghosts, baleful green lights, etc., to render a true ghostly atmosphere for "13 Ghosts."

12. Starting with "13 Ghosts," see how many titles with the word "Ghosts" can be contributed by contestants. Such as "The Ghost Goes West," "Ghost of the Chino Sea," "The Ghost Steps Out," etc.

13. Hold a Monster Matinee for the kids, with those children who best represent monsters like Frankenstein, Dracula, Phantom of the Opera and any of the "13 Ghosts," awarded prizes.

MAKE PENNANTS!



Photostat upward the title treatment and the art work showing the ghosts, for effective front-of-house displays! Pennants might also be worked up, as indicated here, for us in inner lobby, on walls and doors, side of staircase, etc. In addition, use the "13 Ghosts" art in a lobby peep-box, for advance sell. Place reproductions of the ghost-art with warning messages.

GHOSTWRITE!

Use a stunting sky-writer to plant your message in the skies around your town, especially where masses of people congregate. If there is a popular beach nearby, this might be the ideal place over which to plant your message. A variant of this stunt is to make up a huge banner, "'13 Ghosts' Coming _____" and have a plane display it.



HORROR-SCOPE!

Illustrated in reduced size at right is Exploitation Mat 2-B, which measures 4"x10". Have it printed locally in colored ink on colored stock, for two-tone effect, and add your credits at the bottom. It is perfect for street distribution, theatre handout and package stuffer. Enlarge for a lobby stunt, with a spinning hand offering guest admission to lucky patrons picking their lucky numbers.

Order Exploitation Mat 2-B from National Screen.

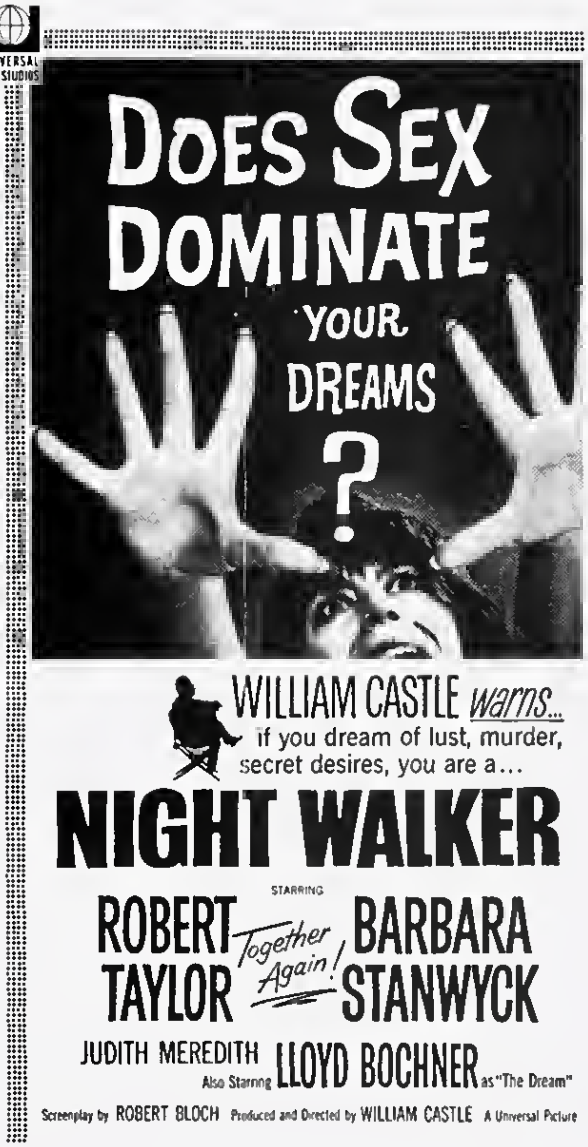


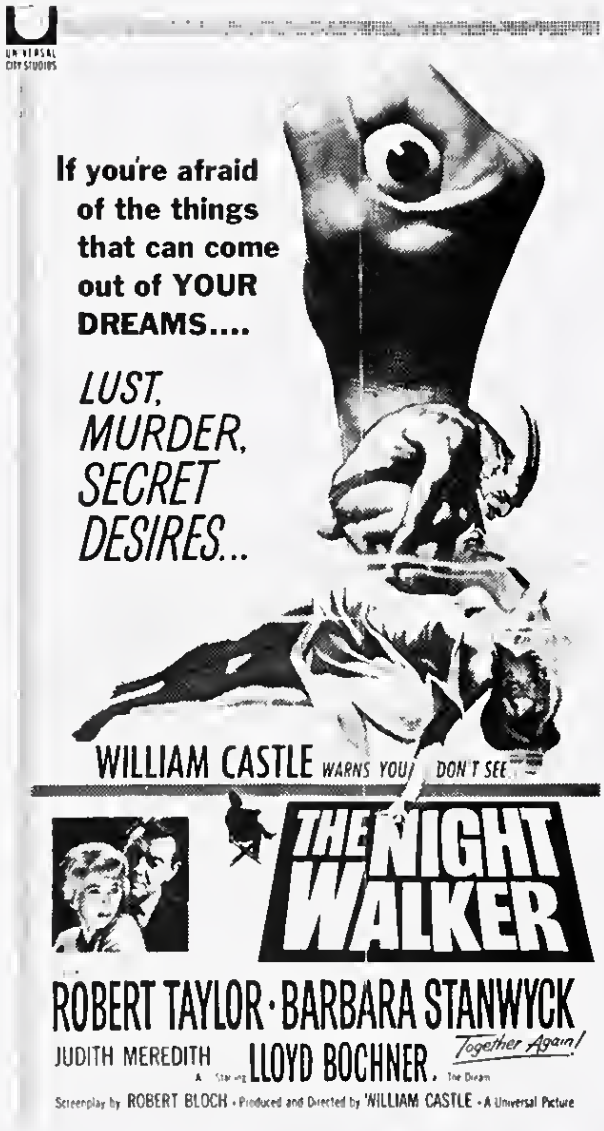
GHOST CLOCK

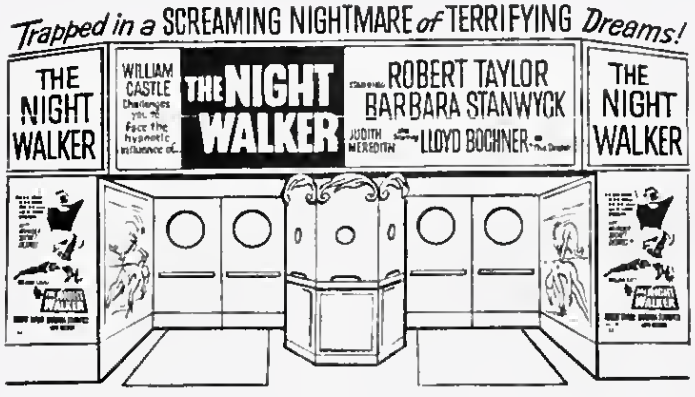
Producer William Castle set up a novel clock, operating on "Pacific Ghost Time," near a main highway in Los Angeles. The clock has skeleton-like hands to point out the 13th hour, with the following copy:

"William Castle and his Supernatural Associates will next haunt you with '13 Ghosts.' Now spooking at Columbia Studios."

Any theatre can adapt this gimmick. Put a "13 Ghosts" clock in your lobby, as well.







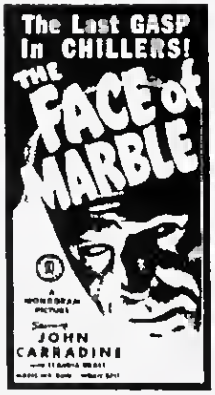
MAKE FULL USE OF YOUR ENTIRE THEATRE FRONT TO BILLBOARD THE SHOWING OF "THE NIGHT WALKER." WITH THE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE POSTER PAPER, BLOWUPS, CUTOUTS, LUMINOUS PAINT LETTERING, LIGHTING AND ART WORK.

The above sketch is a suggestion for your front. Use the 3-sheets, 1-sheet, etc., on a front panel with the strong catch-lines and scene stills effectively spotted in the inner side panels. Complete the eerie shock and nightmarish dream effects with lighting and shadowing.















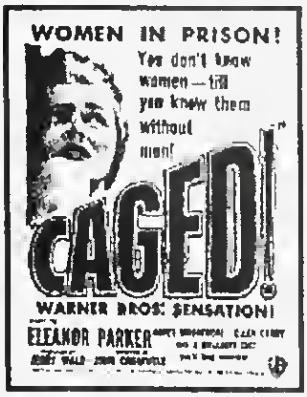




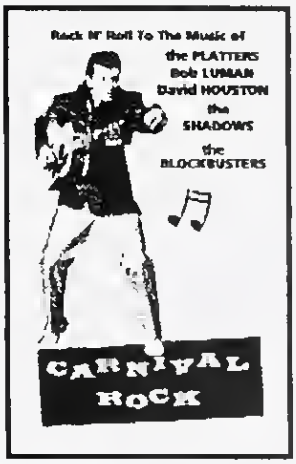


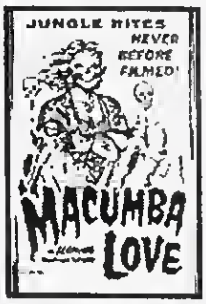






For The Coolest Video Catalog Around
Featuring The Best of: Classic Horror,
50's Sci-Fi, J.D., Bad Girls, Rock N Roll,
Crime & Prison, Bombshells, Comedy,
Explotation & Classic TV
Send Stamps To
THE FANG
PO Box 1012 Floral Park NY 11002
Telephone/Fax 516-354-3715























Rare Original Horror Posters For Sale!

11x14 Lobby Cards:
The Black Cat, 1941 title card w/Lugosi, $350
Black Friday w/Karloff & Lugosi, title card, NM, $1,300
Curse of the Cat People, orig lobby set $800
Dracula 1947 reissue Lugosi carrying Chandler $500
Frankenstein, original release scene card, w/Karloff and Colin Clive facing each other, VG+, $7,500
The Invisible Ray best Karloff, Lugosi F. Drake, VG+ $3,500
London After Midnight, orig title card with Lon Chaney, NM, $7,500
The Mummy's Curse,1944 scene card w/Chaney carrying girl, VG+ $650
Murders In The Rue Morgue, gorilla on bed w/Sidney Fox, Lugosi on Border only $1,000
The Mysterious Mr Wong, 1935 scene w/Lugosi and henchmen,VG, $500
Night Of Terror, scene card w/Lugosi, NM, $1,000
The Old Dark House, 1932 w/Karloff being restrained by cast, G, $3,000
The Raven,1935 W/Lugosi, scene card,montage, Lugosi staring and Lugosi in operating room, pinholes and very slight fading, $2,000

27x41 One Sheets:
Andy Warhol's Frankenstein, VG, $100
The Ape Man W/Lugosi, VG+, $1,200
Astro Zombies,R71 NM, $50
Atragon, VG+, $100
Atom Age Vampire, VG+, $50
Beast Of Hollow Mountain, VG, $150
Beast Of Yucca Flats, VG, $100
Bedlam w/Karloff, G, $350
Beyond The Time Barrier, VG, $75
Blood Feast, F+, $150
Cat Women Of The Moon, G, $350
Cat Man Of Paris, G, $350
The Cat People, R/52, full color, on linen, VG, $750
The Crawling Eye, VG, $200
The Creature Walks Among Us, VG, $600
The Curse Of The Cat People, on linen, VG+, $1,000
The Death Kiss w/Lugosi, on linen, G, $1200
Die Monster Die w/Karloff, NM, $75
4D Man, G+, $50
Fog Island, Zucco, Atwill, G, $100
Gigantis, The Fire Monster, VG+, $150
The Green Slime, VG, $50
The H Man, VG, $100
The Hands Of Orlac, VG+, $50
Horror Of Dracula,VG+, $650
Hercules, w/Steve Reeves, G+, $300
I Married A Monster From Outer Space, NM, $225
I Walked With A Zombie R/56, VG+ $100
I Was A Teenage Frankenstein, VG $350
Invasion Of The Body Snatchers, VG+, $600
Jungle Woman, G some splitting at crease marks, $250
The Man Who Turned To Stone, VG, $75
The Mask, VG+, $75
Monolith Monsters, VG, $200
Mysterious Island, 1951 serial, G+, $100
1984 (1956), G, $150
Night Of Dark Shadows, NM, $65
Panther Girl Of The Kongo, serial, VG+, $100
The Phantom From 10,000 Leagues, F-, $50
Pharoah's Curse, VG, $50
Plan 9 From Outer Space, Ed Wood!, G+, $2,000
Psycho, G, $500
The Raven, 1948 reissue, w/Karloff & Lugosi, F, border trimmed at top, $350
The Return Of Dracula (1958), G+, $100
Return of the Vampire w/ Lugosi, Spanish one sheet on linen, full color, VG+, $1,200
Scared To Death,w/Lugosi, VG $200
The Seventh Voyage Of Sindbad, VG, $225
The She Creature, VG, $400
Shock, 1946 w/ Vincent Price, G+, $200
12 To The Moon, VG, $75
The Thing (1951), G+, $500
The Tingler, William Castle, VG, $100
The Undead, Corman, G+, $150
The Vampire's Ghost, VG, $100
War Of The Zombies, F+, $40
The Wasp Woman, Roger Corman, G, $650
X The Man With X-ray Eyes, VG+, $75
You'll Find Out, w/Lorre, Karloff and Lugosi, G+, $500

German Posters:
Atragon $25 00
Frankenstein Conquers the World $30
Godzilla 1985 $30
Godzilla 1985 (oversize) $50
Godzilla Vs King Ghidrah $50
Godzilla Vs The Thing $50 00
King Kong Escapes $35
Latitude Zero $35
Pearl of Death (Sherlock Holmes) $150
Queen Kong $25 00
X From Outer Space $50

Misc. Poster Sizes:
Brides Of Dracula, 6 sheet 81x81, VG, $400
Circus Of Horrors, 6 sheet 81x81, VG, $150
The Creature Walks Among Us Australian Daybill, VG, $65
Curse Of The Werewolf, 3 sheet 41x81, G+, $300
The Day The Earth Stood Still, insert 14x36, G+, $3,500
Ghosts On The Loose, w/Lugosi &East Side Kids, insert 14x36, VG+, $750
The Mad Ghoul, Realart 1949 reissue 22x28, VG, $200
The Man Of A Thousand Faces, 1957, 3sheet, G+, $125
Monster On The Campus, 1958, Australian Daybill (similar to an American insert but on thinner paper, VG+, $25
Lost Planet Airmen (feature version of serial King Of The Rocketmen), insert 14x36 duotone, VG, $150
The Monster That Challenged The World, 1957, Insert 14x36, VG, $150
The Premature Burial, Roger Corman, insert 14x36, VG, $75
The Return Of The Fly w/Vincent Price, insert 14x36, VG, $150
Revenge Of Frankenstein, 1958, w/Peter Cushing, 3 sheet, 41x81, G+, $150
Revenge Of The Creature, Window card 14x22, G, $400
Rodan, insert 14x36, G, $200
Son Of Kong, window card 14x22, VG, $12,000
Spooks Run Wild, w/Lugosi & East Side Kids, VG, $950
2001: A Space Odyssey, 1969, Australian Daybill, $35
What Ever Happened To Baby Jane, Australian Daybill, NM, $35

Please include $4.00 to cover shipping & handling. Make check or money order payable to:

Cinema Collectors
2238 Paradise Road
Las Vegas NV 89104
(702) 369-6916

Be sure to visit our new location in Las Vegas. We have an outstanding collection of memorabilia for the discriminating collector.

Condition Codes:
NM-near mint
VG-very good
G-Good
F-Fair
P-poor

All items are one-of-a-kind and are sold on a first-come, first-served basis!

Hollywood Spotlight

by Eric Caidin

The 23rd annual Saturn Awards show for the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror films was held on Tuesday, July 22 as the prestigious Park Hyatt Hotel in Century City. The master of ceremonies, Charles Fleischer, a premiere stand-up comedian known worldwide as the voice of Roger Rabbit, was in typical exceptional form as he had the audience rolling in the aisles with laughter throughout the show.

The evening was a star-studded affair with many of the horror, sci-fi and fantasy genres' best known personalities in attendance. Presenters included Cassandra "Elvira" Peterson, Robert "Freddy" Englund, cult film director Roger Corman, Richard Anderson from the *Six Million Dollar Man* series, Nancy Allen of *Carrie* and *Robocop* fame just to name a few.

The Lifetime Achievement award went to Sylvester Stallone and was accepted by his sister. The Presidents award was given to Billy Bob Thornton by his *Slingblade* co-star J. T. Walsh in recognition of his remarkable film.



The Life Career award was presented to Dino DeLaurentis who's amazing career has spanned over 50 years and produced some 600 plus films. Also receiving a Life Career award was director John Frankenheimer, creator of such memorable films as *The Manchurian Candidate, 7 Days In May* and *Seconds*.

The George Pal memorial awards recipient was one of Hollywood's most well-respected producers, Kathleen Kennedy, whose work with Steven Spielberg includes *ET, Poltergeist,* and the Indiana Jones series.

Major awards went to *Independence Day* for best science fiction film. Dean Devlin was in attendance to receive *ID4*'s Golden Scroll. Tom Shadyac the director of Nutty Professor won for best fantasy film; and Wes Craven the director of Scream accepted the award for best horror film.

Cult master pyrotechnician Joe "Boom Boom" Viskocil, who earlier this year won an Oscar for his special effects work on *Independence Day*, got a standing ovation from his fan club in attendance upon winning his award for *ID4*.

All in all the Saturn Awards show was a rousing success. It's a real shame that none of the major TV networks have picked it up for national broadcast.

Congratulations go to Dr. Donald A. Reed and Robert Holguin, producers of the show and heads of the academy; also to show director Dustin Black for putting on a first class production ■

Classified ADS

MONSTER MODELS for sale, ultra realistic! Cacherley, Edison's Frankenstein, Jake from "The Human Monster" and more! SASE to Monstrology Models, PO Box 653, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076>

HORROR! GORE! Sleaze! Rare! Uncut quality tapes $10 - $15. Catalog $2 (refundable). Signature 21+. TJ French, 711 Brookside Ave, Suite 5, Redlands CA 92373. Email: Horrormore@aol.com

1970s XXX Review Zine #3 - $3. 1970s XXX Catalog - $2 (refundable). Uncut Rare Quality 1970s XXX tapes. Farmer's Daughters, Baby Rosemary, Erotic Adventures of Lolita, Thunder Buns, hundreds more. $15 (plus $3 shipping). Signature 21+. TJ French, 711 Brookside Ave, Suite 5, Redlands CA 92373. Email: X70s@aol.com

WANTED: SAL MINEO in "Who Killed Teddy Bear", S.W.A.T pilot - '76 Mineo, Susan Day, Dino - T.V. version 1956. Any Mineo interviews. "Rebellion In Cuba"w Lon Chaney, 1961. Steve Fessler, 151-14 80th St., Howard Beach, NY 11414

HARRY LANGDON T-SHIRTS. White on black, 100% cotton, M to XXL. Authorized by Mrs. Harry Langdon. $15 each, postpaid. Brian Nelson, 52 Hillcroft Ave., Worcester, MA 01606

THREE XMAS tree ornaments, $2.00. Add SASE. Edward Seppe, 109 Maple Street, Weehawken, NJ 07087.

WANTED - POSTER of "The Unholey Three" 1925, any condition. Alan Ende, 40, Morrow Ave, Scarsdale, NY 10583.

HAMMER HORROR! 55 VHS movies for sale. 5 documentaries, plus 2 live Hammer Conventions. Send SASE and letter to Jim Boeckmenn, 2782 Hazelton CT, Cincinnati, OH 45251.

ORIGINAL MOVIE POSTERS for sale. Mostly horror & sci-fi from 1980s - 1980's. Also lobby cards, stills & pressbooks. $1 gets list. LOWRY, Box 43927, Las Vegas, NV 89118

VIDEO TAPE TRADERS UNITE! Psychotronic/Cult Films! Let's exchange video lists! Steven McLaughlin, 1573 Black Angus Way, Marysville, CA 95901.

DON'T PAY MORE for rare, uncut horror, HK action, giallo, sexxx, sf, spaghetti western, punk, etc. videos. Most films $13/two-films-per-tape $20. 1,400 titles, fast, friendly service, fine quality, no rip-offs. Catalog for $1 to: Joseph A. Gervasi, 142 Frankford Ave., Blackwood, NJ 08012-3723.

KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER newsletter "...it couldn't happen here" - episode synopsis, merchandise list, unused scripts, interviews. One Year subscription $8.00 (four issues). Mark Schultz, PO Box 4000, Centerline, MI 48015.

SCIENCE-FICTION/HORROR autographs for sale, vintage performers, signed-reproductions of posters, lobby cards, most in color; Borland, Cushing, Nan Grey, Johann, Price, others. For list send SASE to Jeff Fisher, PO Box 383, Lake Toxaway, NC, 28747.

HAUNTED HOLLYWOOD hard-to-find horror, mystery & SF videos, 1997 catalog is FREE. Silents through 1960s. Collector Videos $10. Hundreds of titles. Send stamp to PO Box 213 Ligonier, PA 15658 or call (412) 238-6436. Visa/MC accepted.

DON'T PAY MORE FOR RARE VIDEOS! Over 1,000 uncut Euro/Asian/U.S. horror, Hong Kong action, giallo, filth, punk, spaghetti Western, Japanimation, art, etc. films. Most $13 one film, $20 two films on one tape. Fast, friendly, reliable service. Catalog $1 to Joseph A. Gervasi, 142 Frankford Ave., Blackwood, NJ 08012-3723.

CATFIGHTS, BONDAGE! Celebrity, Amateur, Hollywood, homemade wanted. Jennifer POB 2192, Topeka, KS 66601-2192

MICKEY'S TOYS AND COLLECTIBLES "Really Cool Stuff" Catalog is loaded with toys, games, figures, books, audio and video featuring "GODZILLA" and More! To get FREE CATALOG write to: Mickey's, PO Box 558433, Chicago, IL 60655-8433 (#10 envelope with 55 cent postage appreciated, but not required), FAX mailing info (773) 445-4558 or Email us at mickey-toys@juno.com

FOR VAMPIRE LORE, more, subscribe to bimonthly newsletter. Send $25 check to Derkland, 707 1/2 Goshen Avenue, Fort Wayne, IN 46808

DON'T PAY MORE! Thousands of horror, trash, gore, nasty, exploitation videos with trailers! Send two stamps for shocking illustrated catalog. UV, PO Box 681914, Orlando, FL 32868-1914

FANS OF FRANCINE YORK. Now available to you! Personally autographed photos from Batman (Lydia Limpet of Bookworm episode), Lost In Space (Queen Niolani of The Colonists episode), Wild, Wild West (Night of the Pelican) as Venus DeMilo on Bewitched, & many more! Also videos of cult movies & TV shows of Miss York's career. SASE for free illus. brochure to: Fans Of Francine York, PO Box 55008, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

PLEASE HELP! Wanted on VHS "Tarzan's Greatest Adventure"(1959) and "Tarzan The Magnificent"(1960) both starring Gordon Scott. Any information would help. I've been searching for years! Please write or call: Eddy Chapman, 16 Ocean Terrace, Lynn MA 01902 phone (617)581-9372.

HAMMER HORROR: videos for sale! 40 Movies, + 4 Documentaries, +2 live horror conventions. S.A.S.E. and letter to: Jim Boeckmann, 2782 Hazelton Ct., Cincinnati, OH 45251

WANTED: VHS TAPE TRADERS! Cult Films! Your list for mine! Steven McLaughlin, 1573 Black Angus Way, Marysville, CA 95901

CHINESE FIREWORKS! Jackie Chan! Jet Li! Chow Yun-Fat! Hong Kong's heroes on video - as low as two movies for $10.00. Satisfaction guaranteed! For 28-page catalog send $1.00 to: Ed Springstead, Oh Boy Video, 6 Davis Place, Latham, NY 12110

MOVIE POSTERS, Lobby & NSS Sets, autographs, Rock & Roll Material. Photo List and 61 page specialty video/CD Rom Catalog $5.00. James Sutton, 12680F Energlen Loop, Stanton, CA 90680

Classified Ad Rates — 50¢ per word to: Cult Movies, 6201 Sunset Blvd., Suite 152, Hollywood CA 90028

Back Issues of Cult Movies!



#1-Our all-Lugosi issue! 100 pages, 120 photos, posters, pressbook repros. Guide to Bela's Hollywood homes, film checklist, special articles, video reviews and much more



#7-Turhan Bey, *Godzilla vs Mothra*; Karloff's *Mondo Balordo* Mexican Trash Cinema, Superman, Bela meets Milton Berle, over 100 video reviews and much more



#8-Coffin Joe, Vampira, Harry Novak Interview; *Hellavision* Kenneth Anger; final interview of Peter Coe Ray Dennis Steckler filmography, Jade East Interview; more



#9-Bob Cresse interview Vincent Price, Karloff & Lugosi Frank Henenlotter interview Godzilla director I. Honda interview, Coffin Joe Roadshowrarities, much, much more



#10 — Coffin Joe, Dinosaur Island Zacharia Korla Pandit, Pete the Pup, Lon Cheney remembered, Ultramen, *Dark Eyes Of London*: *Night Of The Living Dead*, much, much more



#13—Batman serials Dave Stevens interview Lugosi Lydecker brothers, Ed Wood Jack Hill Jack Baker remembered, Kay Parker Samuraifilms, part 2 by Chris D., more



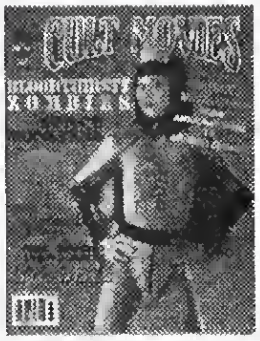
#14 British horror ban of the 1930s, Gordon Scott interview Loretta King interview, Titus Moody, Special double issue! Complete George Reeves biobook! 120 rare photos!



#15—Tod Browning & Lon Chaney, the Mummy, Dave Stevens interview, part 2, Vincent Price Ray Dennis Steckler, Murders in The Rue Morgue Nyoka Samuraifilms more



#16 — Maria Ouspenskaya Samurai Films, Part 4-Erotic elements Lugosi on stage John Agar; Al Adamson, the Munsters Android Killers, Lon Chaney, Korla Pandit: much, much more!



#17 — Joe Dallesandro Asian invasion from Anna May Wong to Annabel Chong, Godzilla, Invisible Horrors, Titus Moody Interviewed, Tin Can Terrors, Forrest J Ackerman's "Deadlines From Karloffornia," much much more!



#18 — Joe Dallesandro Returns Steve Reeves interviewed, When Karloff was king, The Apeman revisited, Bloodthirsty vampiras of Mexico Jack Arnold, Charlie Chaplin on "The Art of Comedy" much, much more!



#19-Special double issue! Forry Ackerman's Specemen returns! Barberella, 2001, Godzilla, Merian C Cooper's career, Kay Parker interview Ann Robinson, Robert Dunham interview, Carl Anthony, much more!



#20— Hercules, Bons Karloff and the Horror Ban, Moe Howard, Pat Priest interview: Buster Keaton, *Vanishing Point*; Harry Langdon, The *Raven* pressbook, much, much more!



#21— Double issue Cult Movies & Specemen! Ed Wood, Harry Langdon Laural & Hardy, Toho Studios overview, Forry Ackerman interview, Star Trek, Star Wars, Mars Attacks!, Harry Thomas, much, much more!



#22 — Phantom of the Opera, Dwight Frye, Herschell Gordon Lewis, Japanese Gangster cinema, Harry Langdon, Alex Gordon interview, Donna Mertell interview, classic sci-fi, Tony Cardoza much, much more!

Send check or money order payable to:

Cult Movies • 6201 Sunset Blvd. Suite 152 • Hollywood CA 90028

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

- ❑ Issue #1 ..... $9.95
- ❑ Issue #7 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #8 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #9 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #10 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #13 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #14 ..... $19.95
- ❑ Issue #15 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #16 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #17 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #18 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #19 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #20 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #21 ..... $7.95
- ❑ Issue #22 ..... $7.95

Total Enclosed _____

ALPHA BLUE ARCHIVES

CALL OR WRITE FOR OUR FREE CATALOG OF 60'S & 70'S ADULT SINEMA.
1-4 videos $19.95 each
5 or more $15.95 each

SILVER 70's SINEMA!

VINTAGE 1970's XXX SINEMA

ANAL ULTRA VIXENS 1970 79 Busty superstars Linda McDowell Vanessa Del Rio & Lisa Deleeuw do anal Disco soundtrack



BUTTERFLIES '76. Harry Reems. Maria Forsa. Nymph-like blonde heats up the screen in highly erotic masterpiece by Joe Sarno. Gorgeous color.

DIVINE OBSESSION 79 Small town girl robbed raped and abused by New York scum blows her brains out during a live strip act
DOMINATRIX WITHOUT MERCY 76 Jamie Gillis Vanessa Del Rio C J Laing in New York roughie shock full of brutal sadomasochism

EROTIC CARTOON FESTIVAL '76. Teen addicted to XXX comics shows us her favorites: LITTLE ORAL ANNIE, KINGDOM OF CLITORIS, FURTHER ADVENTURES OF SUPER SCREW & many more!

EROTIC DR. JECKYLL 75 Harry Reems Terri Hall C J Laing Perverse hunchback and Dr Jeckyll get laid in hilarious XXX absurdity

F E M A L E CHAUVINISTS '74. Candy Samples, Uschi Digard, Roxanne Brewer. German language, no subtitles.

FORCED ENTRY 74 Harry Reems Vietnam vet slaughters female prey THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE OF ADULT CINEMA Raw

HARDGORE '73. Hospital DEATH cult terrorize teenage Marie with meathooks, castration, deathdreams, decapitation, throat slashings & blood orgies!

NEADS OR TAILS 73 Uschi Digard Rene Bond Sandey Corey German language with no subtitles

HOT SUMMER IN THE CITY '76. Lisa Baker. Black militants abduct & defile lily white virgin. Directed by Gail Palmer.





INCREDIBLE SEX RAY MACHINE '74. Uschi Digard, John Holmes. Mad scientist satisfies perverse cravings. WALL TO WALL SEX!

JOY 75 Sharon Mitchell Teen nympho causes female rape spree in New York City HUSTLER's highest rating!
MY TEENAGE DAUGHTER 74 When daddy's little girl become everybody's little girl



PORNOGRAPHY IN HOLLYWOOD '72. Uschi Digard, Malta. Documents early 70's sex industry. Music by The Spoors. D: Carlos Tobalina.

PORNOGRAPHY & PROSTITUTION IN THE ORIENT 73 Documents Asian sex culture Filmed in Tokyo Hong Kong & Tokyo

PUNK ROCK '76. Private dick searches for junkie runaway in New York's punk rock scene. Original music by "Elda and the Stilettos". D:Carter Stevens.





ROSEBUD '76. Darby Lloyd Raines. Jamie Gillis. An erotic story of incest & suicide. D:Roberta Findlay. First time on video.



SEX WISH '75. Zebedy colt. Terri Hall. C.J. Laing. Crazed nightwalker violates victims hideously. Uncut.

STORY OF JOANNA '75. Jamie Gillis, Terri Hall, Zebedy Colt. Wealthy libertine shapes sensitive girl into total sex slave. D:Gerard Damiano.





TEENAGE DEVIATE '76. Annie Sprinkls is sex starved [illegible] addicted to bubble-gum and gang bangs.

TEENAGE SEX KITTEN 74 Rene Bond Teenagers defiled by demented old hermit!

XXX DOUBLE FEATURE #9 Big breast superstar Candy Samples stars in THE ELEVATOR and SEX AS YOU LIKE IT. Also starring John Holmes, Sandy Dempsey & Sandy Carey.



XXX DOUBLE FEATURE #28
EVIL WAYS OF LOVE 72 Early Gerard Damiano production SWEET & SOUR 73 Jamie Gillis Cindy West New York sex slayer punishes busty women

1970's SOFT X SINEMA



G R E A T HOLLYWOOD RAPE SLAUGHTER '71. Frustrated filmmaker goes on bloody shotgun rampage. First time on video

JOHN HOLMES AND THE ALL STAR SEX QUEENS 80 John Holmes screws Candy Samples Uschi Digard Kitten Natividad & Kelli Stewart
LINDA LOVELACE FOR PRESIDENT 76 The original XXX superstar in silly sex comedy



MISTY 1975. Rebecca Brooke. Jennifer Welles, Chris Jordan. Intelligent eroticism. by Joe Sarno. 1st time on video.

PANORAMA BLUE 74 Rene Bond Uschi Digard John Holmes Color sex travaganza!

PRETTY WET LIPS '74. Bridgette Meier. Buster & Chickie violate schoolgirl hitchhiker & suburban wives. First time on video.

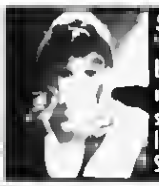


PERMISSIVE 72 Teen girl becomes mixed up in London groupie scene Original music by Forever More Comus and Titus Groan



ROAD OF DEATH '73. Carol Connors. Gang of bikers rape busty blonde chicks. Original music by The Joe Banana Thing. First time on video.

SAOOLE TRAMP WOMEN 72 Candy Samples Rene Bond Harlots in fine garters service gang roping outlaws Beautiful color



SAPPHO DARLING '69. The highly sensual, busty Yvonne D'Angers radiates sweet love in sensitive story of lesbionism. From Sweden.

TARZ & JANE & BOY & CHEETAN 75 Georgina Spelvin Tarz has his dark bitten off by a crocodile Cheetah sticks his Throbbing Pink into Jane's Keyster & much more happens in hilarious Tarzan spoof First time on video

SOFTCORE D.F. #4 THE LAST STEP DOWN '71. Uschi Digard. Malta. Busty hookers initiate virgin into world of prostitution. SPREAD IT AROUND '70. Malta. Busty blonde learns all about swinger's lifestyle.



SOFTCORE DOUBLE FEATURE #7
Busty superstar Uschi Digard stars in SKIN FLICK MADNESS 71 & THE MAGIC MIRROR 70



SOFTCORE D.F. #8 JANIE '70. Sadistic teenager leaves bloody trail of hacked-up bodies in her sexual pursuit of "Daddy". D: Roberta Findlay. Also includes the Findlay's TAKE MY HEAD '71.

ALPHA BLUE ARCHIVES®, INC.
A permanent archive for the preservation of erotic, exploitation & ephemeral cinema. Our commitment is to QUALITY. We use only the best film transfer and video duplication services available. Most importantly, we do NOT CENSOR our films!

Alpha Blue Archives®, Inc., Dept. CU, P.O. Box 16072, Oakland, CA 94610.
E-mail: archives@sirius.com. 24hr. Ph/Fax: 510-268-0811.
Payment by cash, check, Money Order, Visa & Mastercard.
All tapes recorded SP Mode on high quality tape—shipped in plastic clamshell cases with full color covers.
Orders shipped UPS ground to street address. Orders shipped USPO to P.O. Boxes.
$5.00 1st tape, .75 each additional. CA residents add 8.25% sales tax.
International orders $9 first tape $5 each additional. NTSC-VHS only! Checks must clear.
Allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery.

ALL VIDEOS NOW IN FULL COLOR PICTURE BOXES!




IT WILL SCARE YOU OUT OF YOUR SKIN!
UNIVERSAL PRESENTS
The Cat Creeps
with LOIS COLLIER FRED BRADY
PAUL KELLY NOAH BEERY, JR.
DOUGLASS DUMBRILLE ROSE HOBART
Screenplay by Edward Dein and Jerry Warner - Original Story by Gerald Geraghty
Directed by ERLE C. KENTON - Associate Producer: Will Cowan - Executive Producer: HOWARD WELSCH